THE GAROS

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...RRYING COTTON ...

THE GAROS

BY

MAJOR A. PLAYFAIR, I.A.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER EASTERN BENGAL AND ASSAM

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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PREFACE.

In the following pages I have attempted to give a description of the general characteristics, customs, and language of the Garo tribe. They are a people who are little known to the outside world, and, though living in the midst of a civilized province, have remained free from foreign influence in a remarkable degree. This is due partly to the supposed unhealthiness and inaccessibility of their hills, and partly to their natural conservatism. In this connection I have the Hill Garos in mind, for those who inhabit the plains belong to a different category, and have lost many of their tribal characteristics.

Although my task has been a pleasant one, I have had to overcome some difficulties besides the initial one of acquiring the language of these people, for being by nature suspicious, they are apt to look for ulterior motives in the questions of the foreigner.

It has been necessary to use a number of Garo words in the course of my narrative, so, in order to facilitate their pronunciation, I have introduced three diacritical marks to be placed on the vowels. For the values of the

vowels I am indebted to the Rev. E. G. Phillips of the American Baptist Mission in Tura.

a	has the sound of		"a" in father.
é	,,	,,	"a" in may.
e	,,	,,	"e" in tell.
i	,,	,,	"e" in me.
ĭ	,,	,,	"i" in fill.
o	,,	,,	"a" in call.
ō	,,	,,	"o" in so.
u	,,	,,	"u" in truth.
ai	,,	,,	"y" in my.

The added sign (°) is used to indicate the abrupt cutting off of the syllable after which this is placed, as *na°a*, you, and *so°a*, to cause to burn.

A. PLAYFAIR.

July, 1909.

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INTRODUCTION.

The province of Assam—at the far north-eastern corner of India—is a museum of nationalities. The fertile valley of the Brahmaputra, which intersects it, has been raided for many centuries from Burma on the one side, and from India on the other, and the raiders have left behind them an abundant store of curiosities in races, religions, and languages. The Assam hills contain still more ancient collections of humanity, since they have been the lairs to which older nations have retreated before the pressure which a more abundant and a more resourceful population has concentrated upon the productive lands which fringe the river. But this museum has, till recently, remained un-catalogued—has, at least, been undescribed in a systematic catalogue. Colonel Dalton's great work, "The Descriptive Ethnography of Bengal," is a mine of information: census reports, articles in the Journals of the Asiatic Society and other Societies, deal more or less completely with certain tribes; but the information available is scattered and fragmentary, and five years ago the Government of Assam decided to bring together all that had been collected by previous investigators, to correct it, complete it, and bring it up to date in a series of monographs, which were to be prepared by gentlemen who, as Government officials or as missionaries, were in close touch with the tribe that was their subject-matter, and could write with the illumination and resource which comes from writing on the spot. To Major Playfair has been entrusted the task of describing the hill tribe known as the Garos. As Civil officer in charge of the

district inhabited by them he has been in daily communication with the people of whom he discourses, his sympathy with them has unlocked their hearts, and the remarkably close acquaintance he possesses with their language has enabled him to profit to the full by his opportunities for inquiry.

Inhabiting the outermost end of the mountain promontory which runs out into the rice lands of Bengal, the Garos were the first mountaineers with whom the people and the rulers of Bengal would come in contact, and they are mentioned with frequency in the early records of British rule. They are generally mentioned with disapprobation as a truculent, obstinate people, much given to harrying the plains. And in truth, for many generations past, they have been in ceaseless feud with the proprietors of the plains villages which fringe their hills, asserting, not without some show of truth, that their rights originally extended over these villages, and that they had been dispossessed by chicanery and by the assistance which these proprietors had been able to secure from the former rulers of Bengal. To put an end to these troubles the British Government laid down a boundary line. But the Garos have refused to accept it. Such claims as they may have possessed have, for legal and for practical purposes, long since been extinguished by lapse of time: but for them tradition does not fade before prescription: rice lands of the plain are a tempting contrast to the stony slopes which they cultivate in their hills; and the persistency of their ideas has been a source of great profit to lawyers of Calcutta, who, too astute to bring these obsolete claims before the definite judgment of the Courts, have contrived to foster hopes which the Garos are willing to back with extraordinary large subscriptions. During the past ten years this agitation

has unsettled the Garos with much useless heart-burning. For, like their neighbours in the plains, they have a passion for litigation, find hope in a cause which is, on the face of it, hopeless, and do not yield to disappointment which would have blunted the appetite of a more practical race. Perhaps their passion for litigation springs from the means of gratifying it, for money is much more plentiful with them than with the other hill tribes of Assam. They are not dependent upon the forest produce which ordinarily constitutes the exports of a mountainous district, but have for many years derived a very substantial income by the sale of a coarse cotton which they grow on their hill slopes. It thrives in a rainfall which would be ruinous to the ordinary descriptions of cotton, and yields a produce which, though rough and short-stapled, finds a ready market for purposes of adulteration and stuffing. At the foot of every valley leading from the Garo hills to the plains is a market to which the cotton is brought in huge sausage-shaped crates of wicker work, and is sold to the agents of firms in Calcutta and Chittagong.

The Garos are of the stock known as the Tibeto-Burman, which drifted into Eastern India and Burma across the plateaux of Tibet. Their language still retains some similarity with Tibetan: and some of their ideas, such as the sentimental value they attach to gongs, are identical with those prevailing in Tibetan villages. It is more curious still that their language in its general construction, and in a few survivals of vocabulary, should show traces of affinity with Turkish, supporting the theory that from some spot in Central Asia a vast migration was impelled, possibly by growing scarcity of rainfall, and that from some of the wandering hordes are descended peoples which now occupy Burma and a great part of Assam. It is

remarkable that, as Major Playfair has discovered, traditions should still be current amongst the Garos of their migration from the uplands of the Himalayas to the valley of Assam. This is a most interesting illustration of the tenacity of oral tradition amongst an unlettered race.

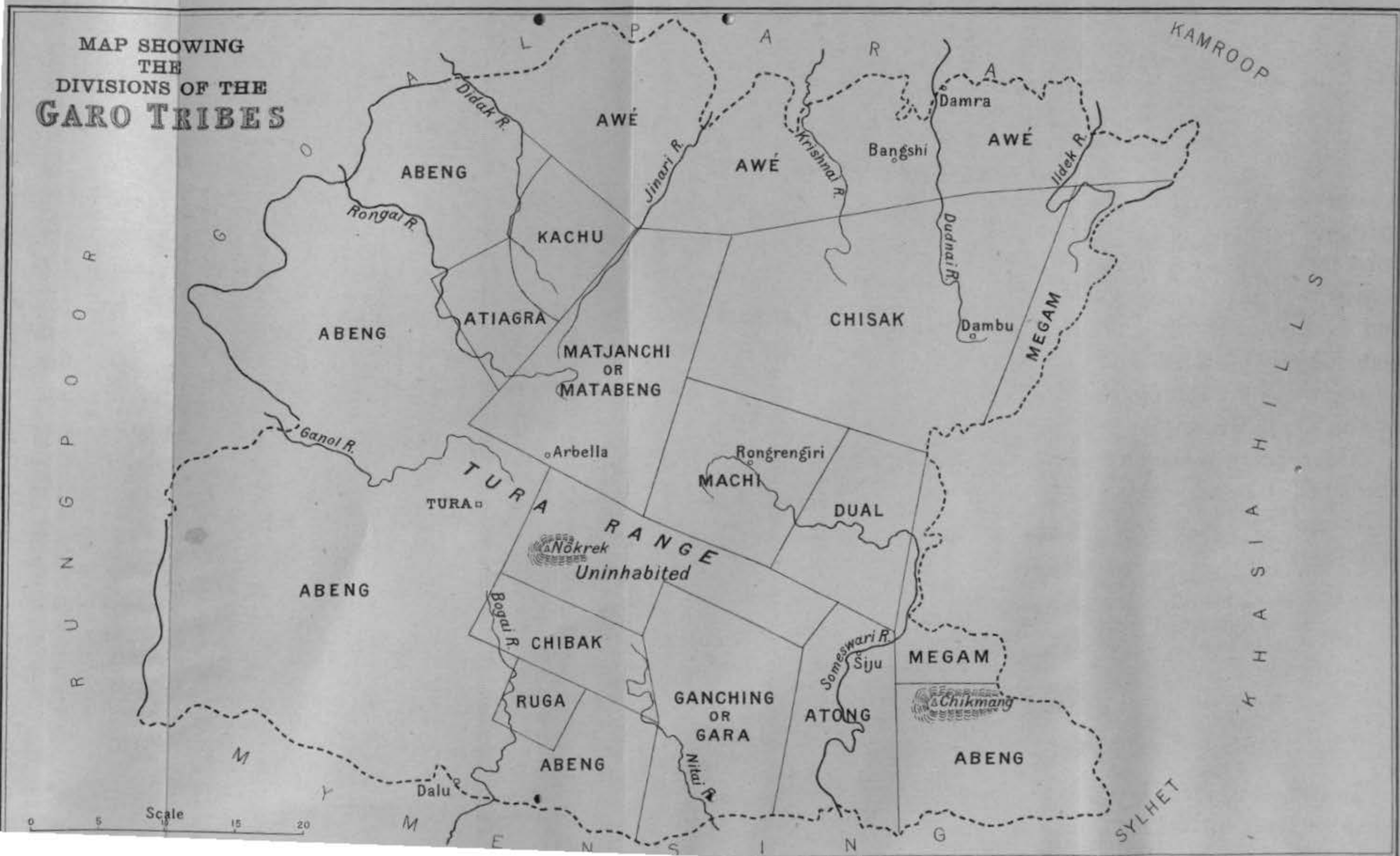
A curious feature of the Garo economy is the surviving influence of the matriarchate. A man marries into his wife's family, and in theory it is the woman who holds the property. It is possible that the Garos have in this respect copied from their near neighbours the Khasis,* with whom, though of entirely different origin, some Garo tribes have inter-married freely. Amongst the Khasis the matriarchate is a living and active institution, influencing profoundly social and political life. A man's heir is not his son but his sister's son. So amongst the Garos it is to his sister's son that a man looks for the guardianship of his widow and children.

It is an odd coincidence that it is only amongst the two matriarchal tribes of Assam—the Khasis and the Garos—that Christianity has as yet shown strong powers of conversion. Garo villages are pretty numerous that have become entirely Christian. They owe their evangelization to the labours of missionaries from America, and their Church organization is exceedingly democratic, the village synod undertaking to settle questions, such as the suitability of candidates for baptism, which need more than ordinary administrative capacity. By their evangelization, and the school teaching which accompanies it, the missionaries are influencing very greatly the future development of the race.

BAMPFYLDE FULLER.

July, 1909.

* Concerning whom a monograph, written by Major P. R. T. Gurdon, has already been published.


MAP SHOWING
THE
DIVISIONS OF THE
GARO TRIBES
GOALPARA
KAMROOP
RUNGPORE
KHASIA HILLS
MYMENSING
SYLHET
Didak R.
Jinari R.
Krishnai R.
Dudnai R.
Ildek R.
Rongai R.
Ganol R.
Bogai R.
Nitai R.
Someswari R.
AWÉ
ABENG
KACHU
ATIAGRA
MATJANCHI
OR
MATABENG
CHISAK
MEGAM
MACHI
DUAL
CHIBAK
RUGA
GANCHING
OR
GARA
ATONG
Damra
Bangshi
Dambu
Arbella
Rongrengiri
TURA
TURA RANGE
Nokrek
Uninhabited
Siju
Chikmang
Dalu
Scale
0
5
10
15
20

THE GAROS

SECTION I.

HABITAT.

At the western end of the range of hills which forms the southern boundary of the Brahmaputra Valley, where the river flows through the province of Assam, is situated the Garo Hills district. It lies between 25° 9′ and 26° 1′ of North Latitude, and between 89° 49′ and 91° 2′ of East Longitude. It is bounded on the north and west by the district of Goalpara; on the south by the district of Mymensingh; and on the east by the Khasi Hills. It contains an area of 3140 square miles.

This country is the home of the Garo tribe, who are, however, also found in considerable numbers in the surrounding districts. According to the census of 1901, they were distributed as follows:—

Garos inhabiting the Garo Hills district .	103,538
Garos inhabiting other districts . . .	56,898
Total	160,436

APPEARANCE.

In complexion the Garos are not very dark, though they are considerably more so than their neighbours the Khasis, and they possess the Mongolian type of feature in a more marked degree. In this connection I cannot do better than quote the description of the Garo features given by Col. Dalton in his "Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal." "Their faces are round and short. The forehead is not receding, but projects very little beyond the eye, which is small, on a level with the face, very dark and obliquely

set. The want of prominence in the nose is remarkable. The whole face has the appearance of being flattened, the mouth sharing in the compressed appearance and not at all prognathous."

Col. Dalton makes no mention of the Garo hair. It is sometimes straight, but more often wavy and even curly.

PHYSICAL AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

As a people, the Garos, both men and women, are short, the former averaging 5 ft. 1½ ins. and the latter 4 ft. 10 ins. In build they are rather lean and wiry than stoutly made, and a fat man is quite a rarity. They do not exhibit the development of the lower limbs that is such a feature of, for instance, the Khasis, but an outdoor life and continual climbing up and down their rugged hills has made them hardy and capable of much endurance. Though strong, they are not remarkable as porters, though in the cold season they make long marches to market with heavy baskets of cotton on their backs. The finest physique is to be met with among the inhabitants of the higher ranges, and among the Atongs of the Someswari valley. In the first case this must be attributed to the healthier climate in which they live, for in the low hills bordering on the plains fever is very common, and in the past, *Kala-Azar* played havoc among the people of the outer ranges. This fever appears to have first been noticed in 1869, and it existed in epidemic form for many years. Sporadic cases are still found, but the scourge has lost its virulence and the people are recovering from its ravages. Better physique among the Atongs is ascribed by some to the fact that among this section of the tribe marriages are contracted when the parties are of more mature age, though among none of them can child-marriage be said to be in vogue.

The women are not beautiful, especially when they pass middle age, but when young, they are buxom and healthy in appearance and their good-natured, smiling faces are far from unattractive. A great disfigurement is the distension of their ears by the weight of enormous earrings, which often break the lobes in two.

The men rarely have hair on their faces, though some grow

apologies for beards. If a moustache is worn, it usually consists of a few hairs on either side of the upper lip, owing to the custom of pulling out the rest.

The Garos have no distinctive manner of wearing the hair, which is seldom cut. Men and women wear their hair alike, either simply kept up on the top of the head and off the face by means of a *pagri*, or tied in a knot behind. Those who have long been in close relationship with foreigners, imitate their fashion and wear the hair cropped short.

There is much that is very pleasing in the character of the Garos, when their manners have not been corrupted, as is sometimes the case, by a veneer of civilization or by contact with foreigners. They are friendly and pleasant in manner, and usually exhibit very little trace of shyness. They are neither subservient in demeanour nor unduly forward in their advances. They are honest and fairly truthful, unless they happen to be questioned about a claim for land, when they seem to be absolutely unable to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

Litigation among the Garos has greatly increased of late years and tends to moral deterioration in this respect. Though usually frank and outspoken, it is very easy to arouse their suspicion, and once this is excited, their stolid obstinacy is very difficult to overcome. On the subject of their religious beliefs, it is not easy to obtain information, and I have often been hopelessly baffled by the characteristic reply "*Uija*"—"I do not know."

The Garos are not noted for their love of washing and leave much to be desired in the way of personal cleanliness; this applies specially to the eastern Garos, who are much dirtier than the western. Col. Dalton gives them a better character in this respect, and describes how both sexes love an open-air bath, but the fact that skin diseases are very prevalent among them is, I think, proof that the Garos are not a clean people. This remark applies to the uncivilized Garos only, for the efforts of the American Baptist Mission have resulted in a higher standard of living among their converts. Christian villages show a considerable improvement, and both men and women have learned to clothe themselves and to take a pride in personal cleanliness.

The Garos are said to be very lazy, and it is certainly difficult to induce them to do a fair task even for good wages. At the same time, nobody would accuse them of sloth who had seen them felling trees to clear land, weeding their fields, and harvesting and bringing their crops to market. As they have very few requirements besides those that their fields supply, it is natural that they should not care to work for wages. There can hardly be another aboriginal tribe in India more easily circumstanced than the Garos. Real famine never touches them, for even if the rice crop fails, they have so many other cereals and edible roots on which to fall back, and the jungle supplies them with so many more of the latter, that it must be a bad year indeed when the Garo has to go hungry. One great passion, the love of drink, does go some way towards bringing the Garo to poverty, for to brew his rice beer he requires a great quantity of grain, and he sometimes exhausts his granary early in the year for this purpose and leaves himself very little to eat. With this exception, the Garo has few vices; he does not eat opium, take *ganja* or gamble, and he is rarely in debt. He loves a "spree" and a big feast accompanied by singing and dancing, but he has few other amusements and is quiet and very law-abiding.

It is an interesting sight to watch the Garo on market days, for he is a conscientious attendant at the *hat* which his village patronizes.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

The Garos may be roughly divided into Hill Garos and Plains Garos, and both classes inhabit the district which owes its name to the tribe. Plains Garos are also found in the undermentioned districts to the extent noted against each :—

Mymensingh	34,180
Goalpara	10,842
Kamrup	5,144
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	5,768

In Kuch Behar and as far west as Jalpaiguri in the Duars, small settlements of Garos exist, though their number is insignificant. The above numbers are taken from the Census

Report for 1901, in which it was also shown that 964 Garos, were then employed as labourers in tea gardens in parts of Assam other than those I have named.

A glance at the map will show that the home of the tribe is a dense, irregular mass of hills of low elevation, which is traversed from N.W. to S.E. by a main central ridge, known as the Tura range. These hills rarely rise much above 2,000 feet except in the Arbella range, where the elevation reaches 3,200 feet, and in the central ridge, which maintains a fairly even altitude of 4,000 feet. The highest peak, Nokrek, is 4,652 feet high.

The official headquarters of the district are at Tura, a little station situated at an elevation of 1,300 feet on a spur running out from the most western end of the main range.

The rainfall all over this tract of country is very heavy, particularly along the foot of the central range which forces the moisture-laden winds from the Bay of Bengal to rise to a cooler atmosphere and thus causes condensation of their water vapour. The average rainfall of Tura during the past five years has been 154·39 ins. The rainfall decreases with the elevation of the hills and distance from the central ridge, and is very much less on the borders of the district than it is in Tura. It is, however, sufficiently heavy to cause a very rank and dense undergrowth to spring up, which is in great part responsible for the unenviable reputation that the district possesses of being malarious.

The Garo Hills are densely wooded, but owing to the Garo method of cultivation, really large forests and trees have almost disappeared except in deep valleys and where Government has established reserves. These reserves cover an area of 141 square miles out of a total area of the district of 3,140 square miles. They mostly contain *sal* trees, some of which, especially in the Dambu, Darugiri and Rongrengiri reserves, are very fine. With the above exceptions, the country is covered with trees of smaller size and bamboos, save where patches of land have been cleared for cultivation. The only part of the hills which is open and free from trees or brushwood is the Balpakram plateau, which lies to the east of the Someswari river and borders on the Khasi Hills. This plateau appears

to be a mass of limestone rock covered with a thin layer of soil, on which grow only short grass and a few isolated trees.

Many streams take their rise in the higher hills, and finding their way down to the plains over narrow and rocky beds, pour their waters into the Brahmaputra and Megna basins. The valleys of these rivers form the main outlets into the plains, for through them run the paths which lead to the markets at which the Garos sell the produce of their fields.

The scenery in many parts of the hills is very fine, the finest being that on the Someswari river, which flows through a very narrow valley between high and precipitous hills. Being thus closely confined, the river rushes along over immense boulders which render navigation impossible for the greater part of its course. During the rains, the river is unfordable and liable to such sudden spates, that ordinary bridges cannot exist. The Garos have therefore devised a form of suspension bridge high above the water, which affords them a safe passage across the dangerous stream. The abutments of these bridges are always two big trees, one on each side of the river, and the bridge itself, to which a bamboo ladder gives access, usually commences from a fork twenty or thirty feet from the ground. The roadway of the bridge consists of cross-bars of bamboo which look as if they would scarcely bear a man's weight, and are far enough apart to suggest the possibility of falling through. It is suspended by a series of canes which are fastened to the upper branches of the two abutment trees. A cane railing on either side of this apparently frail structure completes the bridge. During the cold weather it is not necessary to make use of these bridges, for the water is low and the Garo either constructs smaller ones from rock to rock or wades through the water.

On the lower reaches of the Someswari and of some other rivers, the Garos are fairly expert boatmen, and make free use of waterways to convey their field produce to market.

I have purposely avoided any technical description of the geological formation of the Garo Hills, but a list of works of reference on the subject will be found in the bibliography at the beginning of this book. Coal has been discovered in considerable quantities in the Someswari valley, and elsewhere in



A CANE SUSPENSION BRIDGE OVER THE SOMESWARI RIVER.

smaller quantities, but it has not yet been worked. Limestone exists all over the eastern hills.

The earthquake of 1897 was very severely felt in the Garo Hills, but owing to the lightness of construction of the Garo houses, it was not attended by great loss of life. The few persons who were killed were in most cases overwhelmed by landslips, owing to the very steep sites chosen for villages. The intensity of the seismic disturbance in these hills appears to have been greatest in the north of the district, throughout a narrow band of country running from Dambu in a north-westerly direction, through Bangshi to the Goalpara border.

A seismograph has been established at the first-named place, and there and at Bangshi, slight tremors are even now of almost daily occurrence. The valley of the Krishnai river sank many feet during the earthquake, and within a very few days a lake several miles in length and in places more than half a mile broad was formed. This lake has now silted up to a great extent.

ORIGIN.

The origin of the name "Garo" has been the subject of some conjecture. In the southern portion of the hills there exists a division of the tribe who call themselves Gara or Ganching. These people are not far removed from the Mymensingh district, from which direction the Garos were first approached by Europeans or Bengalis. It is therefore not unlikely that this division of the tribe first received their appellation of Gara, that the name was extended to all the inhabitants of the hills, and that in time it became corrupted from "Gara" to "Garo." Another theory, which has its foundation on the story of the migration from Thibet which I have given elsewhere, is that one of the original leaders of the migration was named Garu, and that he gave his name to the tribe. In one of their old songs, I find the country of their origin referred to as *Garu-a°song*, or the country of Garu. From the fact that the Garos never use the name except in conversation with a foreigner, but always call themselves *A°chik* (hill man), *Mandé* (the man), or *A°chik mandé*, I prefer to think that the first is

the correct derivation of the name, and that "Garo" is merely a corruption of the name of one of the subdivisions of the tribe. With regard to the name "Mandé," which really only means "man" or "the man," it has been suggested that the name is a contraction for *Manni dé* or "son of *Man*" (*Man* being the name given throughout Assam to the Burmese). That this is the correct meaning of the word I do not believe, for I have never met a Garo who thought himself to be descended from the Burmese, and the invasion of Assam by these people is of much too recent a date for such relationship to have been forgotten, had it existed. There is probably no definition that we can point to with any show of authority, but a legend exists that one of the ancestors of the Garos was named Nōrō-mandé; that the Garos formerly all called themselves, not Mandé, but Nōrō-mandé after him, and that the first part of the name was dropped and the latter only retained. I fear that this last derivation must be rejected, for it is more than probable that the first part of the name *nōrō* is of Sanskrit origin.

Of the origin of the Garos we have no information of any historical value. Until a very few years ago, little was known of this tribe except by those who suffered from their depredations, and by the officers who undertook the task of pacifying them and changing them into law-abiding subjects. Whence they came originally no one can tell. Col. Dalton, in his "Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal," states on this subject that "the Garos have no tradition of migration; they believe themselves to be autocthonous, and the only people with whom they claim alliance are the Buts and the English." In this respect Col. Dalton appears to have been misinformed. It is probably only a legend, but there does exist among the Garos a very distinct story of their migration from Thibet; of their arrival in the plains at the foot of the Himalayas; of their wanderings eastward up the Brahmaputra valley, and of the subsequent retracing of their steps until they came to the plains which lie between that river and the hills they now inhabit. Here they seem to have settled for a time before making the last move into the mountainous country that now forms the home of the tribe.

According to the legend, the ancestors of the Garos inhabited

a province of Thibet named Torua, whence, without any apparent reason they started on a voyage of discovery under the leadership of two chiefs, Jappa-Jalinpa and Sukpa-Bongipa. The first place in the plains of Bengal of which they make mention is "Rangamati near Rangpur," possibly the place now known by that name in the Goalpara district, which once formed part of the Rangpur district. Thence, these people moved on to Dhubri, where reigned the king Dhobani (possibly a confusion on the part of the Garos with the name Dhubini or Neta Dhubini, the washerwoman of the gods, who is said to have resided in Dhubri (see *Padma Puran*). This king received them in a friendly manner, but being afraid of them, he would not allow them to settle there permanently, so they moved on up the right bank of the Brahmaputra until they reached its affluent the Manas river. Here the emigrants met with their first misfortunes. The chief of that part of the country was both powerful and cruel. He was attracted by the beauty of Jugé-Silché, the daughter of one Kangré-Jingré, and endeavoured to carry her off by force. To defeat his ends her fellow-countrymen hid her in a cave at a place called Jugi Ghopa, and a battle ensued in which the progenitors of the Garo race were defeated. For a few years they seem to have been under subjection, and some of their headmen were poisoned by their taskmasters as a sacrifice to the latter's gods. Eventually, they succeeded in crossing the Brahmaputra on rafts of plantain stems, and escaped from their oppressors. These, however, followed to effect a recapture. The Garos were eating their midday meal when their enemies came upon them, but though surprised, they fought with desperate courage, and with such success, that they were allowed to proceed on their journey without further molestation. A place called Garo-mari, or by the Garos Toplakhawa, in the Goalpara district is said to be where they made their stand.

Proceeding up the left bank of the Brahmaputra, the wanderers at length came to the kingdom of the Assamese raja Lilasing, from whom they suffered much persecution. A neighbouring chief, however,, named Arambit, having fallen in love with a Garo maiden named Jugé-Silché (possibly the same who attracted the attention of the chief on the

Manas), married her. In a subsequent war with Lilasing he availed himself of the fighting qualities of her countrymen, and employed them as mercenaries, apparently to the discomfiture of Lilasing. Not long after, Lilasing and Arambit made peace, and the latter then turned his former warriors into slaves. With his permission, they took up their residence on Baghmela Pahar, a hill about five miles south-east of Boko in the Kamrup district. This hill was unfortunately also the abode of a number of demons, the *Machamaru* or tiger-men, and for fear of their depredations, the Garos were obliged to be always under arms, and to work, as the legend puts it, "with sword and shield in one hand and the implement of husbandry in the other." This fear again awoke their old roving instincts.

They started off, this time moving westwards, thus practically retracing their steps. It was in the course of this journey that the tribe broke up into the different branches to which I shall allude in a future chapter. The names of the places they visited are very numerous, and it is impossible to trace them, but the most important seems to have been Ola-Olding-Tébrong-Changsim, which the Garos now identify with the hill called Tukeswar, situated about three miles west of Krishnai, in the Goalpara district. In this neighbourhood the Garos appear to have become rich and prosperous, and according to general belief among them, a Garo kingdom was established, of which the first reigning prince was Abrasen. He had his palace and capital at Sambol Ading, a detached hill not far from the village of Dakaitdol, in the present *pargana* of Habraghat, to which he is said to have given his name. I have tried to verify the statement that Dakaitdol is covered with the ruins of ancient buildings, but I am told that none are to be seen.

About this time dissension appears to have sprung up among the Garos, for certain persons are referred to in the story as being very wicked. Perhaps for this reason, some of these people set out on their travels again and entered the hills. One party, under the leadership of a chief named Abing-Nōga, moved from place to place until it settled on Nokrek, the highest peak of the Tura range, where Abing-Nōga resided until his death. Signs of habitation are still to be seen there, so perhaps this part of the tale may have some truth in it.

At this point, in consequence of a long array of names and the inconsequent manner in which the narrator has turned from events which occurred in the hills to those which happened in the plains, the legend becomes so involved that it is almost impossible to follow. The Mussulmans who invaded Assam are referred to, and friendly relations appear to have been established, for one of them is said to have married a Garo princess. What invasion is meant cannot, however, be ascertained; whether the first, which has been fixed by Rai Gunabhiram Barua Bahadur and Blochmann as having taken place in 1498 A.D., or the last, which is believed to have been made in 1683. Some versions of the story mention Aurungzeb, so it would appear to point to the invasion of his lieutenant Mir Jumla in 1655. Five or six so-called kings are mentioned as having reigned after Abrasen, and the last of them is said to have lived about the end of the eighteenth century.

I have endeavoured to connect the above tale with known facts in history but without success. Neither Lilasing nor Arambit are to be found in the list of Assamese princes, nor is the name Dhobani known to history except in the manner I have suggested.

No such place as Torua is known of in Thibet, but that is not to be wondered at, for even if the legend be accepted as partly true, the movement of the tribe must have commenced many hundreds of years ago, and the names of unimportant countries and places must long since have been buried in oblivion. With regard to the other places named in the story, some of them can be identified. For instance, there is Rangamati in the Goalpara district, and Garo-mari and Baghmela Pahar (or Matchamelaram, as it is called by the Garos) are in the Goalpara and Kamrup districts respectively, while Nokrek is a peak in the Tura range. This corroboration of the tale, however, is of little value, for it is impossible to believe that all the incidents of a migration which occurred so many centuries ago can have been remembered, and it is much more likely that local names have been added from time to time, when the reciters of the tale failed to call the original ones to mind.

The story of the migration has been told in verse as well as

in prose, but in the former there is so much allegory and poetic license, and the language is so archaic, that it is most difficult to understand. Further, the names have been changed, and the circumstances of the tale also, and the only impression of any value which we can glean from the mass of detail, is that of a general movement of a people from beyond the Himalayas into the plains to the south of them. In one version of the fable a Brahmin is said to have gone into Thibet, where he became enamoured of a Thibetan maid who afterwards became the ancestress of the Garo race.

For anything like confirmation of the legend of migration we must go to Bhutan, for from that country comes a tale which in many respects is similar to that which I have recounted. I quote from Col. Dalton's work to which I have already referred. After referring to Mr. A. Eden's (afterwards Sir Ashley Eden) mission to Bhutan, he continues, "Their history, though they have written annals, is involved in some mystery. Mr. Eden says, the Butias have apparently not possessed Butan for more than two centuries; but how can we reconcile this with the passage quoted by Pemberton from the account of the voyage of Ralph Fitch in 1583 A.D., from which it would appear that the Government of Butan and the intercourse between Butan, Tibet, and Bengal, was very much in that day what it is now. The story that 200 years ago some Kampa (that is Tibetan) troops entered the country and drove into the plains the old inhabitants called Thèpè, supposed to be the inhabitants of Kocch Behar, cannot be sustained, as we must have had in Assam, the history of the migration of the Thèpè had it occurred within that time, and the Kocch are the least likely of all the tribes to come from that quarter. It is probable enough that an event of the kind did take place; we might believe, for instance, that the Garos or the Kacharis had been driven out of Butan by an invasion of Tibetans; but to make this agree with other well-authenticated events, we must add at least 1,000 years to the 200 of the Butan myth."

There can be no doubt that Col. Dalton was right in believing that the expulsion of the Thèpè from Bhutan could not have taken place at so late a date as that which our envoy to that country has fixed upon. Had there been such a

movement into the plains of north-eastern Bengal so short a time ago as two or three centuries, clear traces of it would still exist, and the language of some known tribe would exhibit a very close resemblance to that of Thibet or Bhutan at the present day. It is, however, quite easy to imagine that Mr. Eden was misinformed by a people whose past is admittedly buried in mystery, and who would naturally have vague ideas with regard to the flight of time and the date of an event in their history. It may also be that the movement to which the Garos refer was due to some similar invasion long prior to that which we have just considered. However, there is more to connect the Garos with the people on the other side of the Himalayas than the coincidence of the migration of the Thèpè. If we compare the Garo language with Thibetan we shall find that though there may not be any close resemblance between them, there certainly exists a likeness which cannot be accidental. To illustrate this I have given a short comparative vocabulary in Appendix E, to prepare which, I have referred to a recently published work by Mr. C. A. Bell, I.C.S.

Language alone is no proof of race, and little value can be attached to the vocabulary by itself. There are, however, several points in the Garo customs and beliefs, which I think must owe their origin to the land from which they claim to have come. One of the most remarkable of these is that, although the animal can never have been seen by them, the yak is well known by tradition to the Garos. Yaks' tails are in great request among them and are used in certain dances, such as the *Gurèwata*, which I have described elsewhere. These tails are constantly referred to in their songs, and the Garos, when they are asked how they came to know about the animal, declare that the custom of using the tails was handed down to them by their forefathers. They go further than this, and declare that the tails they now possess were brought by the first immigrants, though that, of course, is impossible. I have seen yaks' tails ornamenting the hilts of Garo swords, and am told that they are greatly prized for this form of ornamentation. The yak is known to the Garos by the names *matchik* and *dongru*, and the former name is so like their word for cattle, *matchu*, that I was at first of opinion that I had

misunderstood my informants. This they assured me was not the case, and they insisted that the animal referred to was the *Tibotni matchu*, or "Thibetan cow." It is easy for the Garos to obtain yak-tails from the different fairs in the Kamrup and Darrang districts, or from Bhutia pedlars, but it is difficult to explain their reverence for the animal and their use of its tail, if they had never had any traditions respecting it.

In one of their old songs on the subject of the migration, the country of their origin is referred to as "the land where the source of the Songdu is." Songdu is their name for the Brahmaputra, and it may be a corruption of Tsampo or Sanpu.

It is difficult to place any reliance on a legend which has been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation, but the coincidence of a similar belief existing in Bhutan and on this side of the Himalayas, which is further supported by evidence of language, points to the possibility that in bygone ages the ancestors of the Garos and of the many tribes with which they are closely allied, did cross the Himalayas and settle in the plains at their foot.

AFFINITIES.

That the movement referred to in the last chapter was wide-spread and not confined to the people whom we now call Garos, seems to be indicated by the remarkable similarity which exists in the languages of a number of the tribes which are scattered over north-eastern Bengal and the valley of the Brahmaputra. In Tippera, the North Cachar Hills, and in Assam in the districts of Nowgong, Darrang, Kamrup, and Goalpara there exist races whose linguistic affinity with each other and with Garo can easily be traced. All these languages have been classed in the Linguistic Survey of India as Bara or Bodo, and belong to the Thibeto-Burman family, which includes true Bara (Kachari and Mech), Rabha, Lalung, Dimasa or Hill Kachari, Garo, Tipura, Moran and Chutia. The subject, has been exhaustively treated in Vol. III. of Dr. Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India, to which I am indebted for my information on the subject.

The standard Bodo tongue has been accepted as being that

of the Plains Kacharis, of whom I quote the following account from Mr. Gait's report on the census of Assam for 1891. "The first historical notice of which I am aware is found in the annals of the Ahoms, who debouched from the Patkoi in 1228 A.D. and found the country at its base in the possession of the Morans and Borahis,* whom they at once subjugated.

"They next fought with the Chutias, who occupied the north-east portion of the Brahmaputra valley, and then came into collision with the Kacharis, whose country lay to the west. This was in 1488 A.D., when the Kachari capital was still probably at Dimapur, from which place it was removed to Maibong in 1536, after a decisive victory had been gained by the Ahoms. The capital remained there for two centuries, when the attacks of the Raja of Jaintia necessitated a further retreat to Khaspur in the plains of Cachar. These migrations were shared in only by the Raja and a few of his followers. The great bulk of the Kacharis remained behind, and became the subjects of the Ahoms in Upper Assam, and the Koch Kings lower down the valley."

Now, of all the different languages of the Bodo group, the one which resembles Garo more nearly than any other is Kachari, and more especially the plains dialect. It is extremely like Garo, as may be seen from the comparative vocabulary and grammar which will be found in Appendix B, and which I have compiled with the help of the late Rev. S. S. Endle.

The many points of resemblance are so striking that I am inclined to think that the two tribes were originally one and the same. A glance at the map of Assam will show that the Garos and the Kacharis occupy fairly compact tracts of country, and are not very far distant from each other; the former inhabiting the Garo Hills and the plains of Goalpara at their foot, while the latter inhabit a long, narrow belt of country immediately to the north-east of them, on the opposite side of the Brahmaputra. I cannot help thinking that the movement of the Kacharis ascribed by Mr. Gait to the invasion of the Ahoms, may in some way correspond with the westery movement of the Garos, which the latter attribute to fear of the demons

* Both these tribes belong to the Bara family. The Morans are believed by some to be the autocthons of the Assam Valley.

who inhabited the tract of country assigned to them by the Assamese raja. If this theory be accepted, it is easy to imagine the tribe divided into two parts, the one taking up its residence to the north, and the other to the south of the Brahmaputra, and the two gradually losing touch with each other owing to the barrier of the great river and the difficult country which separated them. Local influences would suffice to cause changes in their language, which after all, are little more marked than the difference now existing between certain dialects of the Garo tongue.

That there were two such branches, and that one of them did cross the Brahmaputra not far from Gauhati, before the westward march, is believed by some Garos of the present day. They further claim relationship with the Kacharis, alleging that the latter are descended from an ancestress named Kingsari-Kangsari, who married a slave of Sukpa-Bongipa when the Garos were residing at Jugi-Ghopa. In a similar manner they claim relationship with the Rabhas, who, they say, are descended from an ancestress named Saé-Bongé or Bongé-Katé.

Besides the parties which moved down the right and left banks of the Brahmaputra, a tradition exists that a third party went south from the neighbourhood of Gauhati, and it is not impossible to believe that from this last party are sprung the people of Hill Tippera, whose linguistic affinity with the Garos is almost as striking as that of the Plains Kacharis.

A suggestion made to me of a further link between the Kacharis and the Garos is the resemblance which exists in form between the monoliths of Dimapur, the former capital of the Kacharis, and the *kĭmas* or memorial posts which the Garos erect in memory of their dead. The comparison is of great with small, for the Dimapur stones are of immense size, while the *kĭmas* are but wooden posts. Still, the resemblance certainly exists, and the fact that *kĭmas* are always carved to the same pattern (except when they represent a human face) tends to prove that the carving is done on some definite principle, handed down perhaps from one generation to another, the origin of which has long been lost. When we consider further the small number of the monoliths, it is not improbable that they were erected to commemorate a chief or person

of high degree, while the ordinary person had nothing better erected in his memory than the *kĭmas* which are set up in every Garo village.

Besides the monoliths to which I refer, there are close to them, others of a Y or V shape, which resemble in form certain posts to which some Garos tether bulls before sacrifice in their death ceremonies. If we assume that the Dimapur monoliths are memorials to the dead, it may also be that the Y-shaped stones were used in the same manner as are now the Garo posts, and that in them we have yet another link between the Kacharis and the Garos.

I have referred to the near linguistic relationship which exists between the Garos and the Kacharis. A similarity in their customs and beliefs is more difficult to find, but its absence can easily be explained. The Plains Kacharis have for very many years lived in close proximity to the other tribes, which from time to time have overrun Assam. Hindus and Mahomedans have been at their very door for centuries, and it would have been a remarkable thing if, in such circumstances, they had kept their language, religion and customs unaffected by outside influences. On the other hand, the Garos, inhabiting an inaccessible tract of mountainous country covered with dense forest, and believed to be so unhealthy that few cared to venture into it, remained free from the foreign element until the advent of the British a short time ago. The influence of the outside world is only now beginning to be felt among them. Nowhere in the hills would any language but Garo be of use to the traveller, for only a very small percentage of the people has yet acquired a foreign tongue. The Plains Garos, on the other hand, like the Kacharis, are practically bi-lingual, and among them the same traces of Hindu influence may be noticed as exist among the Kacharis and Rabhas.

Mr. Gait, in his report on the census for 1891, has drawn attention to this change among the Kacharis, which began long ago, and is continuing at the present day. According to him "the old rules of exogamy seem to be rapidly dying out in the Brahmaputra valley. In Upper Assam even the names of the old clans are disappearing; in Darrang the names remain, but the rules of exogamy are no longer remembered; and it is in

Nowgong and Kamrup alone that the system is reported to be still in force." In another place Mr. Gait gives an example of the rate at which Hinduism is spreading among the Kacharis. He says, "the rate at which the process of conversion has been going on during the past ten years may be gathered from the fact that only 243,378 persons have now been returned as Kacharis, against 281,611 in 1881" (in 1901 the number was 239,865); "and as there is no reason to suppose that the race is dying out, the decrease can only be accounted for on the supposition that many of them have, during the interval, accepted Hinduism and changed their name from Kachari to Koch." On the other hand, it would be difficult to pick out a dozen Hill Garos who have forsaken their animistic creed for the Hindu religion.

Nevertheless, although the Kacharis appear to have strayed far from their old religion and customs, a certain resemblance is not wanting between their present beliefs and those of the Garos. The Kacharis have a chief god called Siju, who is represented by the Euphorbia cactus (*Euphorbia splendens*), and though the Garos do not worship it, they at least reverence the plant. They have given it the same name, *shishu*, and they plant it near their *asongs*, or sacrificial stones. It is believed to possess great healing power; the juice, for instance, is rubbed on the head when it aches, and a finger that is swollen and sore is thrust into a piece of the plant.

Exogamous marriage still exists among the Kacharis of both the plains and the hills, though, in the case of the latter, the septs differ in nature from those of the Garos, in that male and female belong to separate clans. In one or two important matters the Kacharis and the Garos differ materially. One of these is the matriarchal system which exists among the Garos and not among the Kacharis, and another is the disposal of the dead, who among the Garos are always burned, and among the Kacharis either buried or burned.

Within the Garo Hills district there reside two sections of the Bodo group, whose relationship with the Garos makes them especially interesting. I refer to the Rabhas and the Koches. The Rabhas dwell in the plains at the foot of the most northern ranges of the Garo Hills, and the Koches inhabit the low lands

all along the western and southern border of the district as far east as the Someswari river.

With regard to the Rabhas, a difference of opinion appears to exist, for Dr. Grierson says of them that "Rabha appears to be a Hindu name for the tribe, and many men so called are pure Kacharis." Mr. Gait, in his report on the census of Assam in 1891, refers to them as Totlas and Datiyal Kacharis, names which I have not heard elsewhere, and which are not known to the Rev. A. E. Stephen, who has worked among the Rabhas for many years. Mr. Gait adds, "In Lower Assam it is asserted that they are an offshoot of the Garos, while in Kamrup and Darrang it is thought that they are Kacharis on the road to Hinduism. That they belong to the great Bodo family is certain, but it is not equally clear that the Rabhas are more closely allied to any one tribe of that group than to another. They have their own language (which is fast dying out), and it is not necessary for a Kachari or Garo to become a Rabha on his way to Hinduism." Mr. Gait has named five divisions of the Rabhas—the Rangdaniya, Pati, Maitaria, Daburi, and Kachari. Of these, only the Rangdaniya and Maitaria Rabhas use their own tongue, the others having adopted a form of corrupt Bengali.

With regard to the Koches, there appears to exist a similar difference of opinion. Colonel Dalton believed the Koches of the Garo Hills to be wholly different in cast of features from the rest of the Koch tribe. In his "Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal" he mentions the Pani Koches, who, he says, doubtless belong to the Bodo group. He adds that they are much mixed up with the Rabhas. Dr. Grierson has stated of the Koches that "the very name of Koch has lost its original meaning, and has now become to signify a Bodo who has become so far Hinduized that he has abandoned his proper tongue and is particular what he eats." In another place he says, "according to some authorities, they are Garos who have never got beyond an imperfect stage of conversion to Hinduism."

Both these authorities and Mr. Gait have made particular mention of the Pani Koches, and the last-named has mentioned that the Pani Koches are the only division of the tribe which know the Koch language. According to Dr. Grierson, they are divided into six divisions, viz. the Harigaiya, Satpariya,

Dasgaya, Chapra, Wanang, and Tintekiya. The five first-named divisions have almost entirely abandoned their own language, and many Koches have told me that they know no other tongue but Bengali. The Tintekiya Koches, on the other hand, talk the Koch language, and in their customs and dress differ considerably from their brethren in the other divisions. They seem to be much more closely related to the Garos. Their women wear the *riking* or short Garo petticoat, and bunches of rings in their ears. The latter are of a different pattern from those worn by the Garos, being of the shape of an inverted T instead of round. The Tintekiyas, like other Koches, profess to be Hindus, but they sacrifice fowls to cure various ills, as the Garos do, and worship many of the Garo spirits, Gōera, for instance.

I have made the above digression from my subject in order to introduce some remarks upon the resemblance which exists between these two Bodo tribes and certain divisions of the Garos. A full description of these divisions will be found in the chapter on tribal organization. From the fact that the Rabhas live in close proximity to the Akawés, it would be natural to suppose that the Rabha language resembled the standard Garo dialect. In like manner it would not be surprising if the Tintekiya Koches spoke a language which was nearly related to that of their immediate neighbours the Abengs. This, however, is not the case, and it will generally be found that while both the Rabha and the Koch languages differ very materially from the Awé and Abeng dialects, they bear a quite remarkable resemblance to the dialects spoken by the Atongs and the Rugas, two divisions of the Garos which resemble each other very closely, but differ considerably from the remaining divisions. In order to illustrate this I have prepared a short comparative vocabulary, which will be found in Appendix F.

The four languages which I have compared, have all of them a number of words which are the same as in the standard Garo dialect, and both Rabha and Koch have borrowed largely from Bengali, but I think that the examples I have given prove that the link between the four languages is a very close one.

Passing from a consideration of linguistic affinity, I am inclined to think that a still more important link exists



CHIBOK GARO WOMEN WEARING THE PENTA, A CURIOUS EAR ORNAMENT.

between the Rabhas and the Rugas. I refer to the wearing by the Ruga women (and by some Chiboks who dwell near the Rugas) of the *penta*, a small ivory ear ornament which, when inserted into a hole in the upper part of the ear, sticks out above it, and parallel to the side of the head. This ornament has its exact counterpart, but made of silver, among the Rangdaniya Rabhas, by whom it is called *bola*. The Rugas and the Chiboks also possess silver *pentas*, but they are only worn at the obsequies of the dead. This ornament is not worn by any other Garos, or by any other tribe in Assam that I know of.

There appears to exist a link, but one which I have not been able to follow up, between the Koches and the Atongs in the fact that the latter are generally known as Kochu. To nearly all other Garos the Atongs are known as Kochu, though they themselves prefer the former appellation. The word "Atong" is only the equivalent in the Atong language for the English word "what?"

The similarity of language to which I have called attention exists throughout a narrow belt of country which lies at the foot of the hills. It extends from the Krishnai river in the north of the district, round the western hills and along the southern border as far east as the Someswari. From the Garo Hills boundary, the people I have named extend for some distance into the Goalpara and Mymensingh districts.

The existence of this resemblance is difficult to explain, but if we may accept just so much of the Garo legend concerning their origin as relates to a movement of the tribe from the plains into the hills, a movement which would not be at variance with the theory of their relationship with the Kacharis, a solution of the difficulty may perhaps be found. According to the Garo belief, the tribe entered the hills from the plains of Goalpara, not far from the present Kamrup border. It is conceivable that they were not the first arrivals; that a branch of the same family had settled in the hills before they came, and that the new-comers pushed on before them the people whom they found in possession. It is imaginable that the first inhabitants of the hills were in this manner divided up into separate bodies, of which some were driven west and north, whilst others moved

east and south. Those who came early in contact with foreign and more civilized people may have adopted their religion and customs and lost their own individuality, while others in more remote parts retained their tongue and primitive manners. In the first category I place the Rabhas and Koches, and in the other the Atongs and Rugas. I have questioned some Koches as to their own traditions on the subject of origin. They are not able to say much about it, but they allege that they once occupied the whole of the western ranges of the Garo Hills, but gradually left them for the plains lands, and made them over to the Garos. The "making over" may have been due to a *force majeure* which they could not resist, or the movement may have had its origin in a desire for a more remunerative form of cultivation. The real facts can never be satisfactorily settled, but I am inclined to the belief that in the Rabhas, Koches, Atongs, and Rugas we have the representatives of the original inhabitants of the tract of country which we call the Garo Hills. For this reason, while I class all other Garo divisions with the Kacharis, and believe that they represent the primitive Bodo, I think that the Atongs and Rugas are of different stock and have a common origin with the Rabhas and Koches.

I am of opinion that the Garo Hills Koches are very different from the people of the same name in Assam. There they are divided into two classes, the Bor Koch, who represent a caste, not much below Keot and Kolita, and the Haru Koch, or Kacharis on the road to Hinduism. The Bor Koch may be descended from an animistic stock, but he is so far Hinduized that several good castes of Assamese Hindus will take water from him, while the Haru Koch has only lately been converted from animistic belief.

Strangely enough, the people with whom the Garos seem nearest akin, as far as customs are concerned, are some of the tribes known collectively as Nagas. Many habits and superstitions are common to these tribes and to the Garos, though in language they are very distantly related. The following are among the most remarkable of these points of resemblance.

Mr. Davis, in his note on the Nagas, which is reproduced in the Census Report for 1891, states that "among the Angami and Sema tribes there exists the belief in the existence of

tiger-men, *i.e.* men with the power of turning themselves into tigers." Exactly the same belief exists among the Garos, who, however, distinguish between two sorts of "tiger-men": the *matchamaru* and the *matchadu*, the first being demons, and the second human beings who can at will assume the shapes of men or tigers. Among the Lhotas and Aos, death caused by a tiger involves the family of the deceased in a most serious social taboo. Among the Garos, although the calamity is not followed by quite such dire consequences as among the above-named tribes, the taboo still exists and is the cause of considerable pecuniary loss to the deceased's relations. Among the same Nagas the birth of a child involves a *genna*, or taboo, affecting the whole household, and among the Garos it is *marang*, or taboo, for anybody to go near a piece of cultivation on the day on which a child is born in his village. Oaths are taken by both the Garos and the Naga tribes on the biting of a tiger's tooth. Conch-shell beads are in great demand among both the Garos and the Nagas for necklaces and for adorning their cloths. Both these peoples are accustomed to ornament the posts of their bachelor houses with carvings of animals and fruits, and dancing is a feature of all their festivities and religious ceremonies.

In their funeral ceremonies, a link exists between the Ao Nagas and some of the Northern Garos. Both tribes are in the habit of tethering the bull which is about to be sacrificed to a Y-shaped post. With the Sema Nagas and the Angami tribe the Garos share the custom of collecting their granaries together in one place outside the ring of dwelling-houses of a village. Lastly, both Nagas and Garos were head-hunters. We read in old reports on the Garo Hills of as many as two hundred skulls having been destroyed at one place when the pacification of the tribe was first undertaken, and an old *nokma* described to me how he had been at the taking of three heads, though he was too young to share in the deed. Neither the Kacharis nor the Garos' nearest neighbours, the Khasis, have ever been known as regular head-hunters, although the Khasis of Cherrapunji are said to have been in the habit of performing a dance round the heads of Bengalis who had been murdered in a raid on the plains.

As far as I can learn, none of the customs or beliefs which I have mentioned above are common to either the Khasis or the Kacharis. The Garos occupy the extreme western end of a long line of hills; on three sides their neighbours are plains-dwellers, and have been more or less civilized for many years. Many miles of country and several different tribes separate them from the Nagas, so it is difficult to imagine how it happens that the two tribes are so much alike in so many ways. It may be that if, as I think it possible, the Garos are descended from a tribe which had its home in the vicinity of Dimapur, they may, from the close proximity of their ancestors to the Naga tribes, have inherited some of the beliefs and customs of the neighbouring race. A vague rumour that I have not been able to substantiate sufficiently to call a well-known legend, has reached me to the effect that a party of one of the Naga tribes travelling westward from their hills, halted and settled down in the Garo Hills; and one of the evangelists of the American Baptist Mission in Tura (a Garo) who spent some time in the Ao country, told me that he had been asked by some Aos if he were not one of the descendants of a party of 700 Aos who left their country and travelled westward in the long-forgotten past.

With such vague stories as these we can do nothing but surmise that in some unknown way the Naga group have exerted an influence over the Garos, and have given to them many of their own thoughts and customs.

DRESS.

Garo dress is very primitive. The principal garment of the man is the *gandō*, a strip of blue cotton cloth interwoven with lines of red. It is six inches wide, and about six or seven feet long. It passes between the legs, and coming up behind, is wound round the waist, the end being tucked in under the folds at the back. When the garment is put on, allowance is made, so that there shall remain about a foot and a half of cloth which is allowed to hang over, sporran-wise, in front. This *gandō* is usually quite plain, but sometimes the end of the flap

is ornamented with several rows of white beads apparently made of conch-shell.

On his head the Garo wears a *pagri*, usually of dark blue cotton, but sometimes white. For important occasions, or when he is a *nokma* or *laskar*, he wears a turban of red Assamese silk with an ornamented fringe. The *pagri* is never allowed to cover the top of the head, but is wound round and round in line with the brow, and often sticks out to a considerable distance. A story is told in connection with this custom of keeping the top of the head bare, to account for the grunting noise "huh huh" which the huluk ape makes when it is startled. It is said that the animal looking down on men's heads, sees tangled patches of hair, and thinking that few brains can be under such an untidy mass, calls out "huh huh" in derision, and runs off up the tree.

A cotton cloth or a blanket over his shoulders when it is cold, completes the man's attire; when it is hot, he does without extra covering and goes about in the light costume I have described. Of late years, a large number of old uniforms and frock-coats have been imported and the Garo's utmost ambition in the way of clothing is attained when he is the proud possessor of one of these lamentable relics. Bengali traders are also introducing cotton sheets and coats, so that on occasion the Garo appears more clothed than was formerly the case.

The dress of the Garo woman, though more ample than that of the man, is by no means hampering to her movements. It consists of a piece of cloth eighteen inches long, and just broad enough to meet round her waist in the form of a petticoat. It is fastened at the top, on either the right or the left side by two strings of the same material as the garment, which allow it to remain open on the thigh. This garment, known as *riking*, is universal except among the Christianized Garos and the inhabitants of the plains, who wear clothing similar to that of the Bengalis and Assamese. On their shoulders, the women often, but by no means always, wear a shawl of blue and white cotton. In the hot weather they are usually as innocent of covering for the upper part of the body as the men.

In the Administration Report of the Garo Hills for

1872-73, the Commissioner of the Kuch Behar Division, Mr. T. C. Metcalfe, I.C.S., gives the following amusing description of his endeavours to clothe the savage. "The Rohumaree *hat* gatherings of Garos on a Sunday are very interesting.

"Two Bengali itinerant cloth-sellers were lamenting the dulness of the clothing trade among the Garos. Having bargained and bought up the whole of their scanty stock, I had the same cut into strips and proceeded to dress the ladies. The first who found a cloth put over her shoulders protested violently, and threw it down, imagining, I believe, it was a device of the cloth merchant to insist upon her buying it. The nature of the free gift being explained to her, she was more reconciled to it. A number of Garo lads by this time formed a circle, and a controversy ensued as to how the cloth was to be worn. It was then given to her husband, who apparently proceeded to abuse his wife for not knowing how to wear it. The interpreter then taking it out of his hands, fastened it over her breast, similar to the way that the Rajbunsis wear it. This created great disgust in the mind of the lady, for she pulled it off, saying, 'that is how the Rajbunsis wear it.' I then essayed my hand at classical draping with better success, for she deigned to wear it till she left the *hat*. I was delayed for some half an hour for breakfast, but in crossing a river some two miles on, I came across the lady in her primeval costume, the cloth occupying with a goat the top of a *kilta*." *

Nowadays, there would be no question of a woman not knowing how to put on such a cloth, but to relegate it to her basket on a long journey would still be her natural impulse.

Besides the ordinary garment which I have described, there is the dress worn by women for dancing and on gala occasions. This dress, which is named *marang-jasku*, is of dyed Assamese silk, and is similar to the cloths worn by the Khasis, through whom they are obtained. These cloths are very much prized, and like Garo gongs, seem to acquire value with age. The dress is worn draped round the body, passing under the right arm, and tied in a knot on the left shoulder. It reaches down to the knees, and is open at the left side. The usual petticoat is worn underneath.

* A small basket which is carried by the Garos on their backs.

At these dances the men make but little difference in their dress. In the old head-hunting days a dance was inaugurated after a successful raid. At this, the men wore a garment called *pandra*, which consisted of a black cloth reaching to the waist, wound round the body, under the arms, and laced across with bands of white cotton. This may be seen at some of the present-day dances.

When dancing, both men and women wear on their heads circlets of bamboo or stiffened cloth, ornamented with rows of white beads, to which are added cocks' and bhimraj feathers, and sometimes bunches of paddy in ear. Peafowl are found in the Garo Hills, but their feathers are supposed to be unlucky, and are never used.

Like the men, the women wear turbans, and some slight differences of fashion are noticeable according to locality. The Abeng women of the south and west wear a turban called *ōdōreka* or *salchak*, which consists of a narrow piece of fairly stiff blue-and-red cotton cloth from two to three feet long. When placed on the head, it is folded so as to form a cap. The Abeng women of the north-western ranges wear a loose blue *pagri* similar to that of the men, only rather more voluminous. In the neighbourhood of Bajengdoba, the Kochu women (not to be confounded with the Kochs or Atongs, who are also known as Kochu) do not wear a turban at all, but bind a narrow fillet or strap of cotton, about one inch broad, called *kōkang*, round their heads in line with the forehead. In the north-eastern hills, among the Chisaks and Machis, the women wear a *pagri* called *ōrua*, which consists of a cloth about two feet square. This is laid on the head in such a manner that a piece of it hangs down at the back of the neck. The two front corners are then carried round the head in line with the brow and tied in a knot over the curtain which has been left hanging down behind. The top part thus forms a tight cap. It is not, however, absolutely necessary for women to wear a turban, and they are often seen without.

TATTOOING.

Tattooing is never seen among the Hill Garos, but is occasionally practised by the Plains Garos of the Mymensingh district.

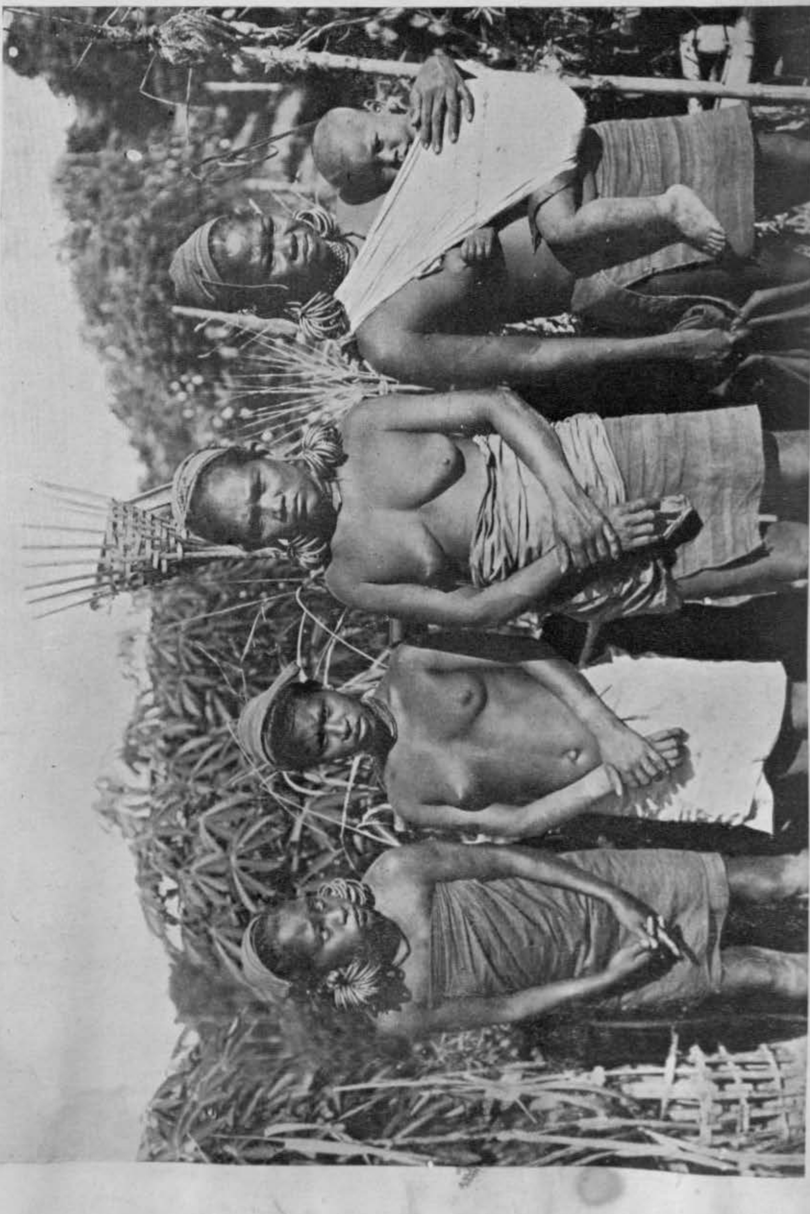
JEWELLERY.

The Garos possess very few ornaments, and the few they have, are insignificant both in appearance and value.

The men wear brass rings of two kinds in their ears. Those worn in the lobe of the ear, called *nadongbi* or *ŏtonga*, are made of thin brass wire and are about one inch in diameter. A man sometimes wears as many as thirty or forty of these in each ear, though between twelve and twenty is the usual number. In the upper part of the ear a *nadirong*, or very small brass ring, is worn, which though often quite plain, is sometimes ornamented with four small brass discs attached to its outer and lower edge. Occasionally, to it is added a string of beads about four inches long, ending in a semicircular piece of brass, silver or crystal. Silver bangles are worn, but I believe them to be of foreign importation. They have also some massive bronze ornaments, to be worn on the wrists on festival days, but which are not often seen.

Necklaces are worn by the men as well as by the women, and are made of long, barrel-shaped beads of cornelian or red glass. The necklaces are purchased from Bengali traders at the various markets. Another ornament which is somewhat rare, is the *kadisĭl*, a circlet of cloth covered with brass studs and worn round the head on a level with the brow. In former days, this was put on when a man went on the war-path, but now it is worn only on festive occasions.

In the north and east of the hills there exists a peculiar ornament which is worn only by *nokmas* or village headmen. It is named *jaksil*, and consists of a heavy ring, usually of iron, but sometimes of brass or silver, which is worn just above the elbow. These *jaksils* are sometimes flat, one inch in breadth, and sometimes of round metal, half an inch in diameter. Some really old *jaksils* are very massive, and consist of heavy metal



rings like sections of a pipe, and two or three inches in depth. I have tried, but unsuccessfully, to find out what rules regulate the number of rings to be worn. Commonly, only one is worn on each arm, but I have seen as many as four. It is considered to be unlucky to take off both or all rings at once, though the wearer will readily remove one at a time for inspection. The rings are first assumed on the accession of a man to the position of *nokma*, a title claimed by the head of a village, or in some cases by men of wealth, with the permission of the headman of the village they reside in.

The comparative variety which the women exhibit in their clothing, is also noticeable in their ornaments. Like the men, they wear brass rings in their ears but of a very much larger size. I have seen them as much as four, and seldom are they less than two inches in diameter. These *shishas*, as they are called, are very heavy. Upwards of fifty may be worn in each ear, so their combined weight is sometimes considerable. The result is that the lobes of the ears first become enormously distended, and at last give way altogether. When this happens, instead of discarding the rings, the woman supports them over her head by a double string which prevents them from shifting from side to side. The tendency nowadays is greatly to reduce their size, and few of the younger women wear very large ones, though what they lack in weight is made up in the number worn. Really old rings measure as much as six inches in diameter; they are rarely seen, but are kept as heirlooms. The modern ornaments are always of brass, but those of more ancient make are of what appears to be bell-metal.

Some fashion exists in these rings, for they are by no means of the same pattern all over the hills. The largest are worn by the southern Abengs, while among the Akawés and Chisaks of the north and north-eastern hills, they are of the same size as those worn by the men. The women of the last-named division of the tribe wear a very distinctive ornament in the shape of a necklace consisting of many rows of blue-and-white or red beads, which hang down far over their breasts and must form an appreciably heavy load.

When a man dies, it is the custom for his widow to put off

her earrings until the funeral ceremony is over, and she sometimes never puts them on again.

In former times, one of the punishments for adultery was to tear away the rings of the guilty woman, wounding her dreadfully, and leaving two unsightly remnants of the lobes. Nowadays, when the fidelity of a wife is impugned, her female relatives sometimes lay aside their earrings until the matter has been inquired into and settled.

Like the men, the women wear the small ring in the upper part of the ear, and to it they attach a small semicircular piece of metal named *natapsi*, from the lower end of which a number of small pendants of the same metal hang down by minute chains. This ornament is sometimes made of silver, though more often of baser metal.

The Chibok and Ruga women of the Bogai valley wear a few small rings, but their own peculiar and distinctive ornament is the *penta*, a small piece of ivory about one and a half inches long, of the thickness of a pencil, and sharpened to a point, which is stuck in such a way into the upper part of the ear, that it projects upwards, parallel to the side of the head. This ornament corresponds to one worn by the Rangdaniya Rabha women in the plains of Goalpara, but is considerably shorter. These *pentâs* are also made of silver, but ornaments of the latter make are a sign of mourning, and it is considered most unlucky to wear them except after the death of a member of the household.

The Ganchings who inhabit the upper Nitai valley wear few rings, and only three or four strings of white beads. I have elsewhere referred to these beads as being used to ornament the loin-cloth of the Garo man and the petticoat of the woman. They are cylindrical in shape, and vary from a quarter of an inch to one inch in length. The material of which they are made appears to be some form of shell, probably conch. The beads are said, by the Garos, to be manufactured by the Megams in the Khasi Hills, but I have not been able to substantiate this statement, and think it more likely that they are purchased in the plains, and brought into the hills for sale. They are sold at from Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 per thousand. Though the raw material is so cheap, ornaments made of these beads

are given very fictitious values, and a necklace or girdle readily fetches any sum up to fifty or sixty rupees, especially if it be old.

Another ornament worn by the women is the *senki*, a kind of waistband which consists of several rows of the above-mentioned beads. The strings of beads are kept apart by means of a piece of carved bamboo through which they pass. When the *senki* is put on, this bamboo comes opposite to the centre of the waist, in front, and the strings are collected together and fastened at the back. The *senki* thus forms a convenient girdle for the support of the *riking* or petticoat.

Brass and bronze bracelets, similar to those of the men, are worn by the women, and for the dance they also wear the brow-bands, which I have described. A curious head ornament used in the dance is the *pĭlni* or *salchak-maldong*. It consists of a bamboo comb about 8 ins. in length, to the top of which is attached a strip of indigo-dyed cloth about 6 ins. long, ornamented with rows of the same white beads as are used to decorate the *senki*. When the comb is stuck into the knot of hair at the back of the head, the cloth hangs down behind like a curtain.

WEAPONS.

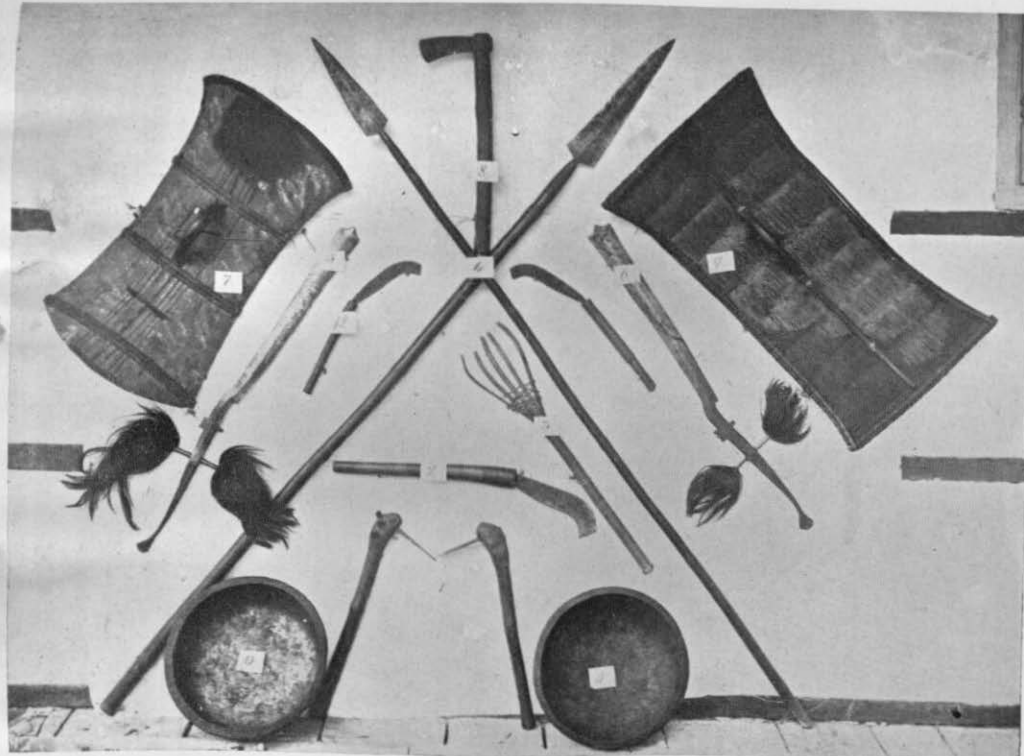
The principal weapons of the Garos are swords and spears, without one or other of which they are rarely seen. The sword is very quaintly designed, and would be found awkward to use by anybody but a Garo. It varies from 3 to 4 ft. in length; has a straight blade about 2 ins. broad, a blunt, arrow-shaped point, and from hilt to point is made of one piece of iron. The grip is very thin, and instead of being straight, is curved, and ends in a flat, sharp-edged, rounded head. This sharp hilt is supposed to enable the owner to stick his sword into the ground by his side when he halts, so as to have it always ready to his hand. At each end of the cross-bar is attached a bunch of cow's-tail hair, or what is more greatly prized, part of a yak's tail. The sword is always carried naked, and is never placed in a sheath or fastened to the body. It is a most useful possession to the Garo on the

march, for with it he can clear jungle which bars his way, split firewood and cut up his food, besides using it for the main purpose of defence. These swords are purchased from the Megams in the Khasi Hills district, and appear to be of Khasi origin. The ordinary weapon can be purchased for two or three rupees, but an heirloom is much prized, and cannot often be bought.

A Garo spear is a formidable weapon, for it is provided with an iron head, 1 ft. or 14 ins. long and 2 or 3 ins. broad. It is very sharp, and is fitted into a bamboo shaft about 5 ft. long. The heads are first cemented into their sockets with lac, and then very neatly bound to them with thin withes of cane, which further serve the purpose of preventing the shaft from splitting. With these spears two or three men will attack a bear, and even tigers are occasionally killed with them. In the big drives for game which the Garos sometimes organize, spears are invariably used, and numbers of pig are slaughtered with these weapons. The heads are of foreign make and are brought by Bengali traders to the markets at the foot of the hills. The spears are used only for thrusting, and not for casting.

Bows and arrows are well known to the Garos, but they are very seldom used; in fact, I have never seen a bow in the Garo Hills. Garo *atés*, or choppers, vary in shape according to locality and the source from which they are obtained, for they are not made in the hills. In the south, the pattern is that which the Bengali ryot makes use of; in the north, the implements are purchased from, and are of the pattern used by the inhabitants of the western Khasi Hills.

The Garos have two kinds of shield. The *sepi* is made entirely of wood, or of flat lengths of wood bound together and covered with very thin strips of cane or bamboo, while the *danil* is made of bearskin or cowhide stretched on a wooden frame. Both kinds are of the same shape and size. They are about 3 feet long by 18 inches broad, roughly oblong, but with slightly concave sides, and with a gentle curve backwards over the hand. They are fitted with handles made of cane.



GARO ARMS AND IMPLEMENTS.

SECTION II.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

OCCUPATION.

THE Garo is essentially an agriculturist. Cultivating the soil is with him the beginning and the end of his life's work, and the occupation to which he devotes all the energy he possesses.

With the following few exceptions, his trading is confined to bartering the produce of his fields for the few things for which he is dependent on the foreigner. Some Garos in the central Someswari valley carry on a petty trade in the white beads, of which all Garos are so fond, and in the *daos*, swords and cloths which they purchase from the Megams in the Khasi Hills. In the lower reaches of the Someswari, a certain amount of trade is done in timber, which is floated down the river to Baghmara and there sold to purchasers from the Mymensingh district. On the Nitai river, bamboos are cut and sent in rafts to the Mymensingh plains, and on this river some boats are made for sale.

The only forms of industry in which the Garos engage are a little ironwork and weaving. There are a few blacksmiths, and every housewife has a rough loom. The former manufacture nothing and are only sufficiently skilled to undertake simple repairs, while the latter can do little more than supply the wants of their households.

There are a few carpenters in Tura and in some of the larger villages, but only an infinitesimally small proportion of the tribe does anything except till the soil and reap the produce thereof.

AGRICULTURE.

A Garo's methods of cultivating his fields are primitive, but the soil is rich, he does not demand too much from it, and he therefore usually obtains excellent results. He cultivates on what is known as the *jhum* system. A piece of land, generally a hillside, is selected and the jungle on it cut down in the cold weather, from December to February. The cut trees, or bamboos, for in many parts of the hills these latter alone are to be found, are allowed to lie until the end of March, when they are burned where they fell. All the crops are sown in April and May, as soon as the first showers have fallen. The method of planting is extremely simple. The land is not hoed up, but when it is soft enough, holes are made at irregular intervals with a sharp, pointed stake, and a few seeds are placed in each. The planting of millet is even simpler, for it is sown broadcast in the ashes of the burnt jungle, and without any preliminary turning up of the soil.

In the first year, it is the custom to sow a number of crops in the same fields. These are gathered as they ripen, millet being the first to come to maturity in July, rice in August and September, and, lastly, cotton in November and December. The fields are weeded twice during the rains in the case of forest land, and three times in that of land on which grew only bamboos. Besides this, when one crop has been harvested, the straw, or whatever remains of the plants, is carefully removed in order to give the later crops a chance of growing. These *jhum* lands are kept under cultivation for two years. In the second year, the only crop grown is rice, after which the land is abandoned and allowed to lie fallow for at least seven years.

Even in harvesting their rice crops the Garos have their own peculiar methods. They do not cut the rice as is done in the plains, but they grasp the ears with their hands and drag off the grains. A harvester always carries two baskets, one on his or her back into which the rice is thrown, and a small basket called *kérang*, fastened to the waist in front, into which are placed specially fine grains to be kept for seed for the next season.

The agricultural implements in use among the Garos are as few and simple as are their household utensils. Besides the chopper, which can be put to so many purposes, they have a hoe, which consists of a small iron blade let into a piece of bamboo root. It just suffices to scrape the ground and to remove weeds. The only implement of husbandry which can be considered as distinctly of Garo origin, is the *jakengbrak*, a kind of short rake made of bamboo. The teeth of this are shaped so as to resemble the five fingers of a hand, slightly bent. It is not universally used, being apparently an invention of the southern Abengs. It is employed to collect the dry roots and weeds into heaps for burning at the end of the first season, when the fields are prepared for the second year's cultivation.

The nature of the soil they cultivate entirely precludes the use of the plough by the Hill Garos, but those who inhabit the plains have long been accustomed to the same form of cultivation as their neighbours the Bengalis and Assamese.

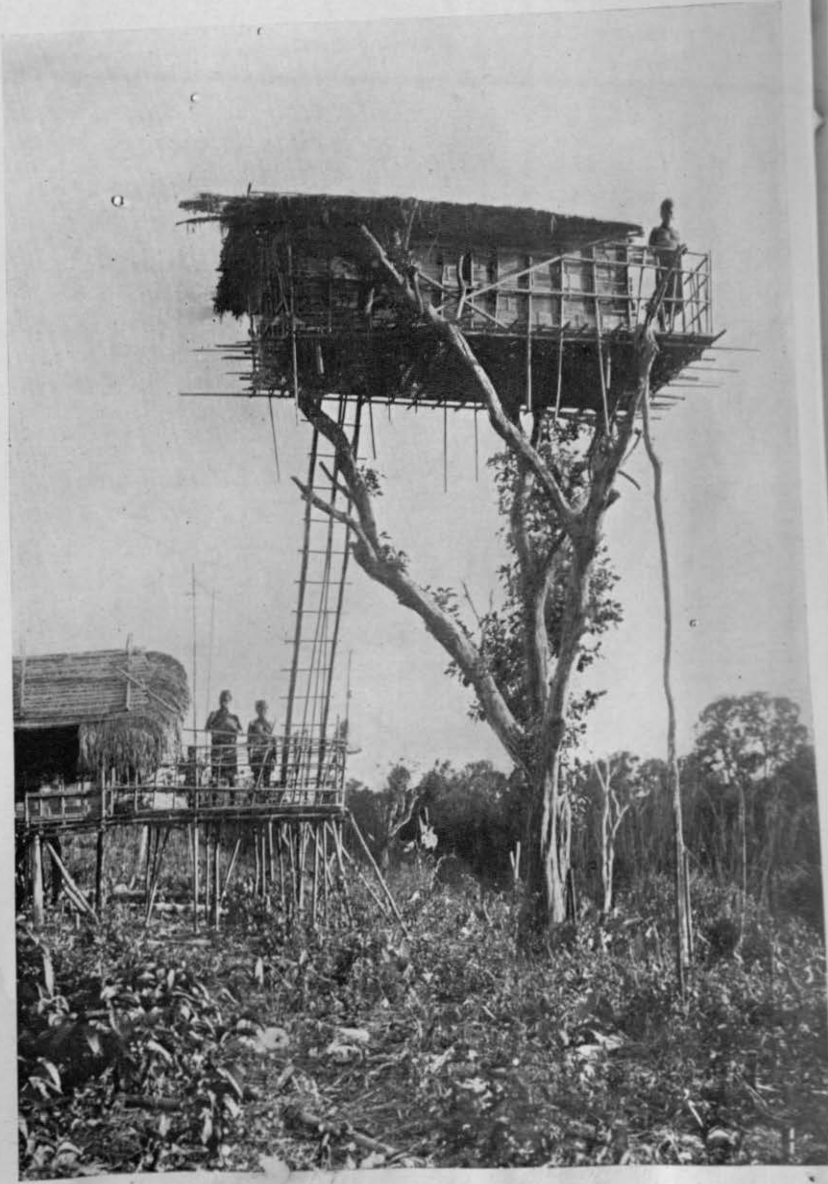
HOUSES.

Garos always build their houses on piles, and if possible on a steep incline. Some of the piles are therefore longer than others. The supports at one end are rarely more than 3 or 4 ft. high, but as the houses generally run out from the face of the slope, those at the other end must be of much greater length in order to keep the floor level. The posts used vary from 4 ins. to 6 ins. in diameter; in the case of houses of more than ordinary size, they are even bigger. The piles appear to be put in with very little regard for regularity. On the top of the floor posts cross-beams are placed, over these a layer of whole bamboos, and lastly, a covering of rough bamboo matting. The walls are made of the same matting, and the roof is a substantial covering of thatching grass. Where this is not procurable, bamboo leaves or the leaves of a species of cane are used. Thatching grass is preferred to the other two materials, of which bamboo leaves form the worst kind of roof. They require to be put on thickly to keep out the rain, and as

they rot very soon it is necessary to replace them every year. The cane roof is a good one, but it is troublesome to put on.

The houses are very long, and for their length rather narrow. Owing to the fact that there are no side windows but only openings in the shape of doors at each end, the interiors are generally dark and gloomy. Houses are nearly always built on the same plan, and are divided into three principal parts. On passing in at the front door, one enters a room which is not on the platform with the rest of the house, but which has the bare earth for floor. This is the *nokkra*, and in it are kept the pestle and mortar for pounding paddy, a stock of dry firewood, miscellaneous household requisites and the cattle very often, when there are any. Two or three steps up on to the platform brings one to the door of the main room or *nokganchi*. This is the public living room of the family, and usually takes up quite two-thirds of the whole building. Although it is without partitions, this room is divided into well-defined areas. At the foot of the centre post, nearest the door, is the abode of the spirits, where sacrifice is offered on such occasions as require the ceremony to be performed within doors. This place is called *maljuri*. At the next post in the centre of the house is the *chusimra*, or place where the indispensable pot of liquor is kept, and where fresh brews are made. Further on is the hearth, which consists of a layer of earth about 4 ft. square and 3 ins. deep within a wooden frame. The earth is laid on a bed of pieces of plantain stem on the bamboo floor. There is no chimney, and the smoke is allowed to escape under the eaves as best it can. Over the fireplace is the *ongal*, a platform of bamboo matting supported by four posts, on which are kept the cooking-pots and other household utensils.

Beyond the fireplace is a clear space in which meals are taken, and where the unmarried women of the household sleep. No apartments are partitioned off for these; they sleep anywhere on the floor. The last room of all, the *nokdring* or *dun*, is the sleeping apartment of the owner of the house and his wife, and beyond this again is a small verandah. When the daughter of the house is married, a space is partitioned off for



BŪRANG OR TREE-HOUSE.

her and her husband in the main room. At one side of the *nokdring* there is often a latrine.

As I have mentioned before, there are usually no windows in Garo houses. When a Garo wishes to depart from the general custom and make one, he is supposed to pay for the privilege, and his fellow villagers expect him to give them a feast in honour of the occasion. Instead of a window, a doorway is sometimes made, which leads out to a small platform, where the family can sit and enjoy the fresh air.

The houses I have just described are occasionally of great size. Colonel Dalton mentions one which was about 260 ft. long and 40 ft. broad. I have not seen any that approached this size, but they often exceed 100 ft. in length. By far the finest houses are to be found among the Atongs of the Someswari valley, who nearly always build on very high platforms and with heavy *sal* timber.

Under the eaves of the house, in front of the *nokkra*, it is customary to plant *kĭmas* or memorial posts erected for the deceased members of the family.

In the chapter on villages I have mentioned the *nokpanté* or bachelor house which is to be found in every village. These *nokpantés* are often of great size, and are on much higher platforms than the other houses. To reach these platforms notched logs of wood serve as staircases, and long pieces of cane are often suspended from an overhanging beam close to the notched logs, to assist the inmates to climb up and down. The main posts of the larger *nokpantés* are sometimes carved and coloured. The subjects of the ornamentation are human beings, tigers and other animals, and various kinds of fruit and vegetables. The best specimens of Garo carving are to be seen in the Ganching village of Imangiri.

Almost every Garo possesses two houses, one in the village and one in his field. During the cultivating season he lives in the latter so as to be near his crops, to weed them and protect them from the ravages of wild animals. When the crops have been gathered and stored, he returns to the village, and resides there until the next cultivating season. There exists at present a great tendency for the people to leave their villages altogether, and to dwell permanently in the fields, in

spite of the drawback that, owing to their method of cultivation, the houses must be rebuilt every two years when the owners move to fresh fields. The field houses are often built high up in trees in order that the inmates may be safe from elephants, to whom the crops are a great attraction, and who sometimes attack the houses themselves when on the ground. The branches of a tree are lopped off 20 or 30 ft. from the ground, a platform is laid over the stumps and a small house built upon it of bamboo and thatching grass. A bamboo ladder gives access to the *bōrang* as the tree-house is called.

It is the custom to celebrate the building of a new house by a sacrifice, which is followed by a house warming feast. Several dedication songs exist which are sung on such occasions, and one of them will be found in the chapter on folklore. The assembled guests sit in two rows in the principal room of the new house, and each of the men in turn gets up and dances between the rows while singing the song. At certain intervals the spectators join in with a chorus, which seems to consist mainly of the repetition of the words *ka* or *kai*. The meaning of the words is tie or bind, and they are exhortations to the spirits to bind firmly the component parts of the house and consolidate the work of the builder.

VILLAGES.

Unlike other hill tribes, such as the Nagas and the Lushais, who build their villages high up on the slopes of hills, the Garos construct theirs in valleys or in depressions on the hill-sides, close to running water. They attach great importance to pure water, and it is quite the exception for them to live at any distance from a good stream. The sites chosen for the houses are nevertheless generally steep, and the villages are rarely on flat ground.

The entrances to nearly all old villages are through groves of jack trees, for their fruit forms an important article of food, and it is the custom to plant the trees as soon as a village is founded. Beyond the trees, one comes upon the village itself, arranged with some show of order around an irregularly shaped open

space called *atela* or *sara*. This is common to all the inhabitants, and in it many of their religious ceremonies are conducted, including even the cremation of the dead. The houses appear to be crowded together, and are, in fact, very close to one another, but as they rarely have windows at the sides, and as there is the *atela* in front, and the limitless jungle at the back, no inconvenience is felt from the houses being built side by side. In the centre of the square, or at one end, is placed the *nokpanté* or bachelors' quarters, for the young unmarried men are not allowed to live with their parents. All strangers are accommodated here, and in this house are held the meetings of the village elders.

In front of each house will probably be seen the wife of the owner busily engaged in husking rice for the daily meals. Sometimes, though not as often as in the plains, one notices the women weaving cloth, and late in the cold season they have to gin the cotton that remains after the greater part of the crop has been sold in the uncleaned state.

Plenty of children play about, and amongst the domestic animals around and under the houses is always that useful scavenger the pig. No attempt is made to cultivate a patch of land within a village for fruit trees or vegetables, as is the custom in the plains; probably for the reason that the pigs and fowls would soon destroy whatever was planted. Here and there may be noticed the various sacrificial emblems, and those connected with funeral rites which I have described in the chapter on religion.

In one corner of the village, or if it is a very large one, in two or three places outside the ring of living-houses, there is always a collection of smaller huts, which, from their size and appearance, are clearly not intended for human habitation. These are the village granaries, of which each family possesses one or more. The custom of building all the granaries in one place no doubt has its origin in the fact that the grain is thus in less danger of fire than if it were stored in the living houses. In many parts of the hills the grain is protected from the inroads of rats and other vermin by laying the floors of the granaries on posts, the tops of which are carved in the shape of a mushroom, so as to give the animals the least possible foothold.

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It is the custom to celebrate the building of a new house by a sacrifice, which is followed by a house warming feast. Several dedication songs exist which are sung on such occasions, and one of them will be found in the chapter on folklore. The assembled guests sit in two rows in the principal room of the new house, and each of the men in turn gets up and dances between the rows while singing the song. At certain intervals the spectators join in with a chorus, which seems to consist mainly of the repetition of the words *ka* or *kai*. The meaning of the words is tie or bind, and they are exhortations to the spirits to bind firmly the component parts of the house and consolidate the work of the builder.

VILLAGES.

Unlike other hill tribes, such as the Nagas and the Lushais, who build their villages high up on the slopes of hills, the Garos construct theirs in valleys or in depressions on the hillsides, close to running water. They attach great importance to pure water, and it is quite the exception for them to live at any distance from a good stream. The sites chosen for the houses are nevertheless generally steep, and the villages are rarely on flat ground.

The entrances to nearly all old villages are through groves of jack trees, for their fruit forms an important article of food, and it is the custom to plant the trees as soon as a village is founded. Beyond the trees, one comes upon the village itself, arranged with some show of order around an irregularly shaped open

space called *atela* or *sara*. This is common to all the inhabitants, and in it many of their religious ceremonies are conducted, including even the cremation of the dead. The houses appear to be crowded together, and are, in fact, very close to one another, but as they rarely have windows at the sides, and as there is the *atela* in front, and the limitless jungle at the back, no inconvenience is felt from the houses being built side by side. In the centre of the square, or at one end, is placed the *nokpanté* or bachelors' quarters, for the young unmarried men are not allowed to live with their parents. All strangers are accommodated here, and in this house are held the meetings of the village elders.

In front of each house will probably be seen the wife of the owner busily engaged in husking rice for the daily meals. Sometimes, though not as often as in the plains, one notices the women weaving cloth, and late in the cold season they have to gin the cotton that remains after the greater part of the crop has been sold in the uncleaned state.

Plenty of children play about, and amongst the domestic animals around and under the houses is always that useful scavenger the pig. No attempt is made to cultivate a patch of land within a village for fruit trees or vegetables, as is the custom in the plains; probably for the reason that the pigs and fowls would soon destroy whatever was planted. Here and there may be noticed the various sacrificial emblems, and those connected with funeral rites which I have described in the chapter on religion.

In one corner of the village, or if it is a very large one, in two or three places outside the ring of living-houses, there is always a collection of smaller huts, which, from their size and appearance, are clearly not intended for human habitation. These are the village granaries, of which each family possesses one or more. The custom of building all the granaries in one place no doubt has its origin in the fact that the grain is thus in less danger of fire than if it were stored in the living houses. In many parts of the hills the grain is protected from the inroads of rats and other vermin by laying the floors of the granaries on posts, the tops of which are carved in the shape of a mushroom, so as to give the animals the least possible foothold.

The practice of placing these granaries at a distance from other houses has, however, its drawbacks, for it is no rare thing for an elephant to come round at night, and finding unguarded houses full of his favourite food, to pull one down and help himself to the contents. In these granaries the paddy is placed in a large basket made of strips of bamboo, which takes up nearly the whole of the floor space. Bunches of Indian corn and millet are often suspended from the roof, and various roots occupy the remaining space on the floor.

In former days, Garo villages were of considerable size and used to contain as many as two or three hundred houses. Liability to attack by a neighbouring village made this necessary, and the danger was further guarded against by sowing the approaches with sharp-pointed bamboo stakes called *wamisi* in Garo, but better known as *panjis*. These presented a very formidable obstacle to an enemy, and effectually prevented a sudden attack. Nowadays, when every man is at peace with his neighbour, the necessity no longer exists for large collections of houses, and the difficulty of finding sufficient land close to big villages for the support of their inhabitants, has resulted in their being broken up into small hamlets situated perhaps as much as four or five miles apart, which, however, in most cases, retain the name of the parent village. In order to distinguish them there is added to the name of each hamlet the name of its *nokma*, or headman.

Garo villages now occupy the same sites for a much longer time than was formerly the case, and are not moved oftener than once in twenty or thirty years.

FURNITURE AND HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.

Garo houses contain a very limited amount of furniture. The bamboo floor or perhaps a raised platform of the same material, is generally sufficient for all requirements. Sometimes a rough seat hewn out of a single piece of wood may be seen, and a cane-bottomed chair is occasionally offered to a visitor of distinction. Tables are never used, and bundles, pots or baskets suspended from the walls or roof, serve for the storage of a Garo's valuables.

Household utensils and implements are equally simple. They consist mainly of cooking-pots, larger vessels for brewing liquor, and the pestle and mortar with which paddy is husked or rice cleaned for eating. The cooking-pots are always of earthenware, and are purchased from traders in the plains. A few of the Garo women can make them for themselves, but they rarely take the trouble to do so. Of the pestle and mortar to which I have referred, the former is merely a heavy pole about 4 ft. long and 3 ins. in diameter, and the latter a section of a tree-trunk with a hole carved in the centre to contain the rice. For winnowing the rice after pounding, they possess a few flat trays of bamboo-work, and of the same material they make such other articles as sieves, spoons and drinking vessels, while plantain leaves serve for plates.

The big pot in which liquor is brewed stands 3 ft. high, and is a most important adjunct to the domestic economy. For use with it, a peculiar basket strainer called *janchi* is made, which is forced down into the fermented mass of rice and water. The liquor percolates into the clear space within the basket, from which it is ladled out with an empty gourd. This gourd has a long thin neck with a larger, rounded end. When the gourd is dry, a hole is cut in the rounded part, while the other serves as a handle. For carrying water, the Garos depend entirely on gourds. They have a number of these of various shapes and sizes, to each of which they give a particular name. These are allowed to dry, and are then converted into water-bottles by the simple process of cutting a hole and shaking out the seeds.

Different-sized baskets, each with a different name, are also used. They are made of bamboo, but have nothing remarkable about them. They are flat-bottomed, and the conical basket of the Khasis is never seen. They are always carried on the back by means of a brow-band. There is one basket, however, which deserves notice—the one in which cotton is carried to market. It varies in shape according to locality. Round about Tura it is narrow and about 7 ft. long. In the north, near Bajengdoba, it is shorter and wider, but still cylindrical, while in the north-east, the frequenters of Dhepa *hat* carry a basket which is narrow at the

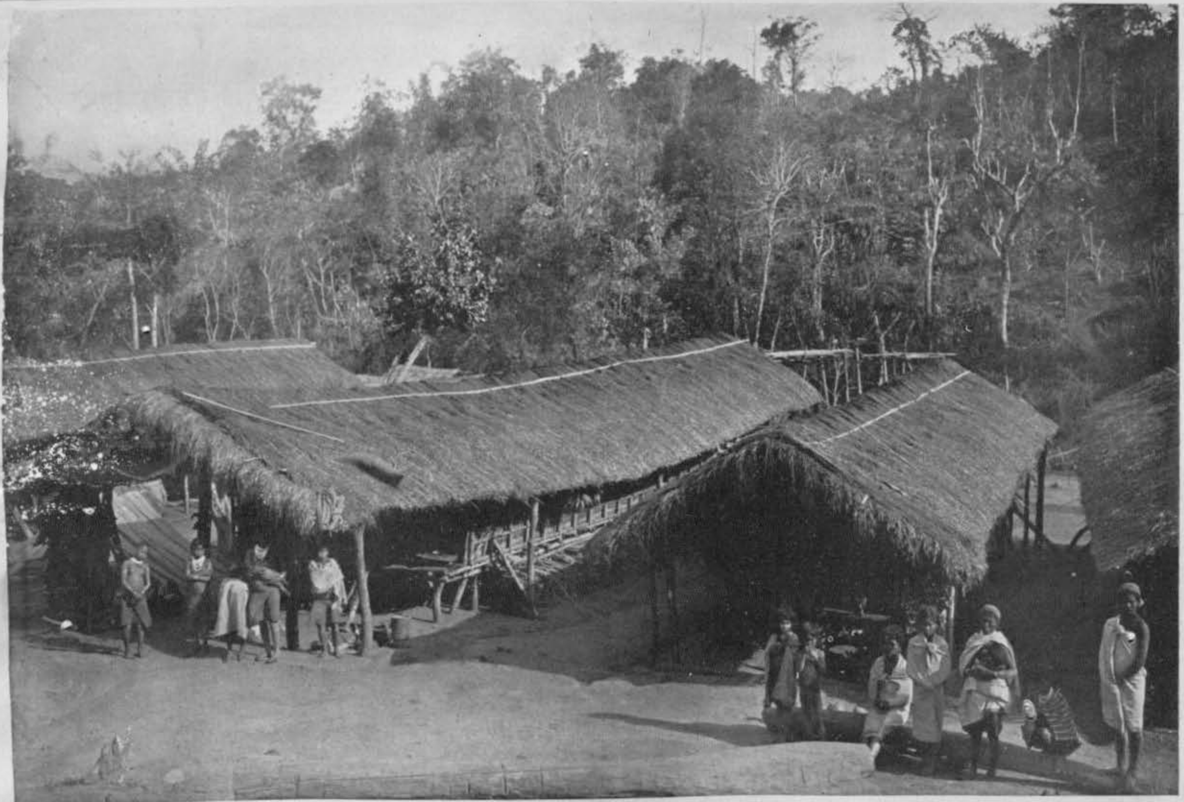
bottom, and opens out funnel-like at the top. In each case the basket is made to contain about one *maund* or 82 lbs. of uncleaned cotton.

Mention must be made of one article of daily use which illustrates the extreme conservatism of the Garo. In most places in the world umbrellas are in daily use; some are to be found in the Garo Hills, but it is much more common to see a Garo sheltering himself from the rain under a large cane-leaf called *rejak*. He binds this carefully so that it shall not split, and asks for nothing better on a rainy day. It folds up conveniently like a fan when not in use, and can as easily be opened.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

The whole collection of Garo musical instruments is not a large one. It consists of a few drums, bamboo and horn wind instruments, and metal gongs and cymbals. There are several varieties of drums, and special uses are assigned to some of them. Unlike weapons and ornaments, which are purchased from foreigners, the musical instruments are of home manufacture. The favourite tree for making the frames of the drums is the *gambil* (*Careya arborica*). The heads are of ordinary cowhide. The drum most commonly used is the *dama*, a long, narrow drum, thickest in the centre, and tapering away at each end. The *kram* is a larger drum. Like the *dama*, it is made of wood with ends covered with cowhide, but it is larger at one end and tapers away to a much smaller size at the other. It is used on solemn occasions, such as funerals and some annual ceremonies of a religious nature, while the *dama* may be used at any time. The *nadik* is a small wooden drum about 12 ins. in diameter and 6 ins. deep, which serves as an accompaniment for the *kram*, but has no separate part to play. The *nagra* is a large drum consisting of an earthenware pot covered with skin. It is sounded in order to assemble the people to the *nokma's* house when he gives an entertainment.

In connection with the *kram* and the *nagra* the Garos have some strange rules and superstitions. The former may not be taken out of its owner's house except on the occasion of an



IN CHERAN VILLAGE

important ceremony. The latter may not be taken out of its owner's house at all, misfortune being certain to overtake any one who allowed this rule to be infringed.

When these drums are first made, special sacrifices are necessary. The drum to be consecrated is laid upon plantain leaves, a fowl is slaughtered, and a little of its blood is smeared on the drum, and some of the bird's feathers are stuck to the drum by means of the blood.

When a *kram* is to be played upon, the owner or one of his relations must be the first to strike up, and not until then may anybody else touch it. Nobody except the owner or one of his relations may beat the *nagra* at all. The above remarks only apply to private *krams* and *nagras*. Besides these, there are always some to be found in the *nokpantés* for public use which are not consecrated in any way.

Most of the wind instruments may be classed as either trumpets or flutes. The *adĭl* is a small pipe made out of the top six inches of a buffalo's horn, to which a bamboo mouthpiece is attached. The *singa* is merely the whole of a buffalo's horn, and is capable of producing at most two or three notes.

The flutes are the *ōtekra*, a big bamboo flute a yard long and one inch in diameter, with only two finger holes. The *ilongma* is a somewhat smaller flute with three stops, and the *bangshi* a yet smaller flute, also with three stops. The *ĭmbĭngi* is of the nature of a flageolet. It is constructed out of a short piece of thin bamboo, closed at one end and open at the other. The outer hard covering of the bamboo is peeled off, leaving the softer white part below. The mouthpiece is a square hole about half an inch from the top of the closed end. From the mouthpiece downwards a small slip or tongue is cut in the upper surface of the peeled bamboo, by slitting it down on both sides to a distance of about half an inch.

Players on these instruments have a very limited *répertoire*, but they have some curious rhymes or jingles, which seem to suit the tunes they play, and by which they are remembered, in much the same way that a British soldier suits words to the bugle calls. One of these jingles runs, "*Ang°jik, tō°jik mani chami.*" It has little or no meaning, being merely the words

"my wife, my sister-in-law, my dear," but when said in a sing-song, the sound of the words is not unlike the tune they are meant to represent.

The familiar Jew's harp is known to the Garos, and is called *gonggina*. Instead of being made of iron, it is carved out of a thin slip of bamboo about 4 ins. long and ½ in. wide. It is so cut that a thin tongue runs down the centre of the slip connected therewith at one extremity only. One end of a short piece of string is fastened to the Jew's harp, and to the other a small bamboo handle is attached. The instrument is held between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, placed between the teeth so that they touch it lightly, and the string is given a succession of sharp tugs by means of the handle held in the right hand.

Besides the above, the Garos possess a number of gongs which deserve more than passing notice. To all appearance these gongs, which are always of the same pattern, are nothing more than very ordinary basins with flat bottoms and narrow rims, made of brass. They do not possess the rich tones of Burmese gongs, and to the European mind are entirely worthless. Insignificant as these gongs may appear to us, however, for the Garos they have a very great value. A man's social standing is often measured by the number of *rangs*, as they are called, that he possesses. A dead *nokma* is laid out before cremation on rows of these gongs, and in cases of dispute in which the headmen have to adjudicate, the fine, when one is inflicted, is always of so many rupees and so many *rangs*. So greatly do they value them, that a pair of gongs have been known to fetch as much as Rs. 500 in auction, and 80 to Rs. 100 is by no means a rare price for old gongs. Those of modern make rarely cost more than Rs. 8 or Rs. 10. After a man's death, it is often the custom to break a hole in the bottom of one of the metal gongs of which he was the owner, and to place it on a stick close to his *kima*, or memorial post.

Of cymbals, the Garos possess two sorts: the *kakwa*, which

* These gongs are also greatly valued by the neighbouring Lyngams or Megams.

in appearance are similar to those of European make, and the *nengilsi*, a smaller kind, in shape not unlike two small cups of brass.

CROPS.

By far the most important crop grown in the Garo Hills is the species of rice which is grown in the forest clearings. Certain valleys run into the hills, which are suitable for wet cultivation, but these are mostly in the hands of Rabhas and Koches. Among the northern divisions of the tribe millet is an important crop, and is often planted on newly cleared land in preference to rice; but in the south, and among the Abengs, this grain is not so much eaten, and rice is planted in the first season. With both millet and rice, in the first year, it is the custom to sow a number of other grains and vegetables, such as maize, Job's tears (*coix lachryma-Jobi*), chillies, melons and pumpkins. The Garos also grow a limited quantity of yams, sweet potatoes, ginger and indigo. In the second year, only rice is grown.

In a few villages orange trees have been planted and have yielded excellent crops, but their number is yet too small to prove the suitability of the Garo Hills for orange-growing on an extensive scale. Several attempts have been made to grow potatoes, which succeed so well in the Khasi Hills, but though the plants have always grown well at first, they have never produced satisfactory tubers.

Next to rice, the most important crop cultivated is cotton, which is to be met with in most parts of the Garo Hills. Three divisions of the tribe, however, the Atongs, the Ganchings and the Duals, will not plant cotton, owing to the superstition that it is unlucky to do so. These people dwell in the south-eastern corner of the district, and to the east of the Nitai river, so that from this river to the Khasi Hills boundary no cotton is grown, except by a few Abengs who have migrated to that quarter from further west. Cotton is sold at over twenty markets situated all along the border of the district, and at Tura. During the cold weather months it is sold unginned, but in March and April the cleaned article is

brought to market. The gins used are of the simplest construction, and of foreign make.

No exact figures can be given for the yearly outturn of cotton, but it has been roughly estimated at between fifty and sixty thousand *maunds* (1 *maund* = 82 lbs.). The price obtained fluctuates with the Calcutta market, but rarely falls below Rs. 7 per *maund* for the uncleaned article, while that of the ginned cotton rises as high as Rs. 27 per *maund*. Garo cotton is said to be very rich in lint, but owing to the shortness of the staple it is not a favourite in the market. The greater part of the crop is exported to Germany.

The sale of lac is also a source of considerable profit to these people, and here we have more reliable information, for the Forest Department levy a royalty on it before it leaves the district, and are obliged to keep a tally of the amount exported. The figures for the past four years are as follows: 1903–04, 4,127 *maunds*; 1904–05, 6,986 *maunds*; 1905–06, 6,276 *maunds*; 1906–07, 5,340 *maunds*. The price of lac also depends on the Calcutta market; it seldom falls below Rs. 35 per *maund*, and is usually much higher.

Although this valuable product is easily cultivated, and brings the growers a splendid return for their trouble, by far the greater number of Garos are afraid to have it in their fields, owing to the superstition that it is *marang* or unlucky, and that their rice crop will be a failure if the lac insect is reared anywhere in the neighbourhood.

Geographically, the cultivation of lac is almost entirely confined to a portion of the hills having the following boundaries: north, the district of Goalpara; south, the Someswari river; east, the Khasi Hills; and west, the Jinari river. According to tribal divisions, it is restricted to the Awés, Chisaks, and a few Machis.

The lac insect thrives equally well on four plants: the *mendu* (*Cytisus cajan*), better known in India as *arhar*; the *bolmengō* (*Grewia Loevigata*); the *boldō°bak* (*Kydia calicina*); and the *prap* (*Ficus Rumphi*). Of these, the first only is cultivated. It is generally sown among the rice in long lines, but occasionally whole fields are devoted to it. The *bolmengō* is a forest plant, and those who wish to cultivate lac thereon, choose

for their fields a spot where such trees are numerous, and cut down the surrounding undergrowth. The two trees named last grow in the forest also, and their produce is entirely a wild one.

The *mendu* is sown when the fields are first cleared, and it attains maturity in the second year. Under favourable circumstances one plant will produce from one to two pounds of lac, and a stunted plant as little as a quarter of a pound.

Lac is gathered twice a year, in May and in November, but a plant will only yield once. When the first collection of lac has been made, a certain quantity is kept apart for seed, and is bound to another set of trees, from which the second collection is to be made.

The *bolmengō* is a bigger plant than the *mendu*, and the yield is proportionately larger.

In some parts of Assam, lac, in conjunction with an acid fruit, is used for dyeing cloth a red colour, but the Garos do not make any such use of it.

The *mendu* bears a grain which is a valuable article of food, but although the lac insect does no harm to the plant, and does not prevent it from bearing a good crop, the Garos are so careless and improvident that they rarely take the trouble to collect and bring it to market.

I have given the Jinari river as the western boundary of the lac country, but of late years the superstition against growing lac has been dying out, and the cultivation is spreading to the west of the river.

HUNTING.

Although their hills are so full of game, the Garos know very little about hunting, and in tracking cannot be compared with many other hill tribes of Assam. This is no doubt due to the immensely thick jungle which shelters wild animals, while impeding the movements of the hunters. They show some ingenuity in setting traps, but even with these they do not kill a great deal of game. Before the occupation of the hills by the British, the Garos were in the habit of setting a trap which, while very effective, was of much danger to human life. It took the shape of a spring bow by the side of a path along

which an animal was known to be in the habit of passing. This trap, known as *wasala*, was prohibited, and is no longer seen. There is still in use a trap made by bending down the branch of a tree or a small sapling, to which a noose of cane or string is fastened. The sapling is kept in position by a catch, which is released when an animal touches the bait, and either jerks the quarry into the air with sufficient force to kill it, or renders it incapable of resistance.

On rare occasions the people of two or three villages combine for a big drive. They then build a long V-shaped stockade, and, spreading out across country, drive into it all the game they can find. Where the two wings of the stockade meet, several openings are left, at which men are stationed, armed with spears to dispatch the animals as they pass through, while the women line the outside of the stockade, and by beating on it with sticks, and uttering shrill cries, deter the animals from any attempt to break through except at the openings left for them. I have heard of as many as sixty or seventy pig and deer being killed in this manner in a single day.

There are a number of salt-licks in the Garo Hills, and a Garo delights in sitting up at night over one of these with a gun to shoot whatever animal may come to it.

FISHING.

As Garo villages are nearly always situated on the banks of, or close to rivers, it follows that fish form an important item in a Garo's diet, and that the people give a good deal of attention to fishing operations. That no effort is spared to procure this article of food may be proved by a day's march down the bank of any stream, however small, towards the end of the rainy season. Most fish are caught when the floods are subsiding. The favourite method of capturing them is to build a *nagĭl* or fishing weir. A strong dam is constructed across the stream, and only a few outlets for the water are left in it. Into each of these outlets is fitted a basket of split bamboo which tapers away to a point. The water flows through the baskets, but the fish cannot pass, and are caught at the narrow end of the trap.



A GARO NOKMA WEARING THE JAKSIL OR ELBOW RING.

On some rivers these *nagils* are built in the neighbourhood of every village, so that the fish have not much chance of escaping, and the rivers are now but poorly stocked.

In addition to the *nagil*, the Garos make a number of other traps which act on the same principle, but which are placed in rapids, and where there is a strong flow of water between two rocks. Of these, the largest is the *chekwé*, a bamboo cage 6 ft. or 7 ft. in length, which is suspended by long canes from trees in such a manner that it lies on the surface of the water. Smaller sizes of this trap, called *asok*, sometimes only a few inches long, are placed between rocks, or in rivulets which do not admit of the larger make being used. The women fish with the *chekké*, a basket shaped like a scoop, and similar to that used by Assamese women. This they plunge into the water before them, and raise with a sharp jerk, thus securing any small fry that may have come their way.

On the Nitai, and on the lower reaches of the Someswari, and on other rivers when the current is not very swift, nets are used in the same manner as in the plains, and in the first-named river I have noticed shelters made of branches and bamboos, which are intended to attract fish and render their capture easy. From time to time these shelters are surrounded and their contents removed.

A custom which unfortunately is a very common one among the Garos is that of poisoning rivers. For this purpose they use various plants. The most commonly employed are the *ruti* (*Randia dumetorum*), the fruit of which is cut into pieces and soaked in water, the decoction thus obtained being thrown into the stream; the *monkal* or *makar*, the roots of which are used in a similar manner; and the *rubok*, the bark of which is used. The poison has the effect of stupefying the fish, which float on the surface of the water, and can be collected without trouble. The system is particularly pernicious, because it destroys so many young fry and immature fish.

On the Someswari, in the neighbourhood of Siju, the people are very expert in spearing fish. Their spears, which resemble long fishing-rods, are made of bamboo. To these are fitted loose barbed heads of thin iron, which are connected with the shafts by short lengths of rope. The head is sufficiently firmly

fixed into the shaft not to drop out, but immediately a fish is struck, the head leaves the socket, and the fish is hauled in struggling at the end of the piece of rope.

Some of the men in this neighbourhood are accustomed to dive after the *gilchak* or fresh-water shark, and harpoon it with a barbed spear to which a rope and float are attached. The fish, on being struck, makes a dash for liberty, but can be easily traced and captured by means of the buoyed line.

FOOD.

The Garos will eat almost any kind of animal food. In their villages they rear goats, pigs, fowls and ducks, and from the plains people they purchase cattle, for they form the only division of the Bodo group that will eat beef. Besides these, most Hill Garos will readily eat dogs and cats, and every kind of wild animal that they can kill, though they would draw the line at tiger's flesh. At many markets scores of puppies are sold for food, though it should be added that before being eaten, these are generally offered in sacrifice. They do not hesitate to eat some kinds of snakes and lizards, and even flying white ants are not despised as a *bonne bouche*. A very favourite article of food is *nakam* or dried fish. Of this a certain quantity is prepared by the Garos themselves, but the greater proportion is purchased in the plains. Cartloads of this most evil-smelling article of food are to be seen at all the large markets. *Gram* or dried venison or beef is also considered a great delicacy.

Generally speaking, the Garos will not drink milk, which they regard as an excrement, but those who are in touch with foreigners have almost lost this prejudice.

Their staple cereal food is, of course, rice, in addition to which they also eat millet, maize and Job's tears. There is nothing remarkable about their manner of cooking these, for they are simply boiled.

Garo cooking-pots are of ordinary earthenware, but on a journey, when weight is a consideration, these are left behind, and the indispensable bamboo forms a very efficient substitute.

Some pieces of bamboo, a foot or two in length, are cut and filled with water and the required amount of rice. These are propped up against a horizontal stick, which is supported by two forked uprights, and a fire is kindled round about them. When the rice has been sufficiently boiled, it is only necessary to split open the bamboos to get at the contents. When a number of persons require to be fed, each person's share is tied up in a bundle in a plantain leaf, and kept until all are ready for their meal.

Their fields provide the Garos with a number of vegetables which have already been named, and from the jungle they obtain many edible creepers and roots. Bamboo shoots are esteemed a delicacy, and are either eaten boiled as a vegetable, or used after special preparation. A big cone about 4 ft. long, made of split bamboos, and lined with plantain leaves, is erected, apex downward. This is filled with chopped-up bamboo shoots, and a vessel of some sort is placed under the cone. The liquid contained in the bamboo shoots exudes after a day or two, and is used for boiling vegetables in, presumably on account of the potash it contains. This alkali is also obtained by burning pieces of dry plantain stem and throwing the ashes into water. Besides this potash, the Garos have few condiments. They grow chillies, and are great salt-eaters, but neither oil nor any kind of fat is used by them in cooking. I was once much amused by some boatmen to whom I gave a box of sardines. They greatly liked the fish, but the oil was too much for them, and after eating, they immediately set to work with great vigour to clean their mouths and teeth.

On ordinary occasions the Garos are frugal in their diet, though they eat three times a day, and always carry food with them when on the march. It is for the feasts that they reserve their forces. These feasts are not lightly entered upon, for food and liquor must be unstintingly provided. Especially must the latter be in sufficient quantity, for there must be enough to make every guest drunk. The preparations having been made, the assembled guests sit down in rows, and appointed servers make the round with baskets full of viands, and fill the hungry mouths with tempting morsels. The bearer of liquor

follows after with a gourd, called *bek* or *pongsim*, and pours a draught to wash down the food.

At these feasts the spirits are not forgotten, and before he begins to eat, the Garo generally casts down a few grains of rice as an offering, and liquor is poured out as a libation to the gods before drinking commences.

Before leaving this subject, one characteristic may be mentioned, which is a curious one, if somewhat disgusting to the European mind. It is the custom of the Garo women to wean their children by feeding them with chewed food from their own mouths. This act is not inappropriately termed *chuchua*.

DRINK.

The liquor which plays so important a part in the daily life of the Garo is always brewed and never distilled. It may be prepared from rice, millet, maize or Job's tears, the manner of its manufacture being the following. Rice, or whatever other grain has been chosen, is boiled soft, and when most of the water in which it has been cooked has evaporated, it is turned out on to mats to cool. A handful of *wanti* or yeast, previously prepared, is sprinkled over the mass of grain, which is then gathered up in a heap and left for about half an hour. The rice and yeast are then put into a *dika*, or large earthenware pot, which is filled with cold water and covered with a cloth. When only a small quantity of liquor is to be made, the rice and water are placed in a big gourd called *pachal*. Two or three pieces of sugar-cane are added, and the decoction is left to brew for a week in the summer, or for as long as two weeks in the cold weather. When ready for use, it is strained by means of a basket, which is forced into the centre of the mass of rice and water. The liquor percolates into the basket, and is drawn off by means of a ladle made out of a gourd. In this state the liquor is known as *chu-bĭtchi* (lit. the egg of wine). This is not usually drunk neat, but diluted with an equal bulk of water. The best liquor is brewed from what is known as *mi-mĭtĭm* or sweet rice; millet is used by the Machis only. Indian corn produces a very bitter beer, and is used only when

nothing better is available. Liquor brewed from Job's tears is a more potent beverage than that obtained from any other grain.

The *wanti* is a compound of a number of herbs and fruits. Its ingredients are the leaves of the *sarat* (*Asplenium esculentum*), chillies, *achetra* (a kind of sorrel), sugar-cane, and the fruit of the *kimka* (*Solanum Indicum*). These are all well pounded, mixed with rice flour, and made into round, flat cakes which can be kept for two or three months. As in the case of other kinds of yeast, a small quantity of an old batch is always added to new wort to help to start the fermentation.

Liquor-making is looked upon as the duty of the women of the household.

GAMES.

Of games, as we understand the word, the Garos have very few, and those few are generally trials of strength. They never collect together for the purpose of amusement in the manner of the Khasis, who make a great event of an archery competition; and it is only the youths of the *nokpanté* in a Garo village who make any attempt to get up outdoor sports. Among the games which they do know, the following are the most important. The *wapang-kala* is a species of cock-fighting, in which the contending parties (two persons only) sit facing one another grasping a short piece of bamboo. They choose a convenient stone to rest their feet against, and a tussle ensues in which the one who can lift the other from a sitting position is adjudged the victor. The *gōgripa* or *cha°gripa* is a form of wrestling. There do not seem to be any particular rules, and it is more in the nature of a bear-fight than anything. The *sué-gōa* is a less boisterous game. The *sué* is a large, round bean, and the game resolves itself into a very poor imitation of marbles. The players take sides, and the number of *sués* lost and won determines the losing and winning sides. The *jakol-kala* is a kind of rounders, the "homes" being small round holes at convenient distances. No ball is used, and the game consists of racing from one "home" to the other, while the party which would be fielding in rounders attempts to catch the runners.

Besides these there exist a number of different kinds of wrestling and cock-fighting, such as the *ading-sala*, the *jakdia*, the *akaru-bidil-sala* and the *ongari-sala*.

Gambling is extremely rare among the Garos, and is only indulged in by those who have acquired the habit from foreigners. Such a thing as a Garo being reduced to poverty by gambling has never, to my knowledge, been heard of.

DANCING.

If anything can be said to be the tribal amusement of the Garos, I think it must be dancing, for that, accompanied by drinking, appears to form a very prominent feature of every social function as well as of religious ceremony.

There is little to admire in their dancing, for of step there is none, unless such a word can be applied to a slow shuffling of the feet in time with the discordant sounds of buffalo horn *singas*, bamboo flutes and drums. Sometimes men and women dance together, and sometimes separately.

Two divisions of the tribe, the Rugas and the Chiboks, differ from the rest of the Garos in this connection, for they dance only at funeral ceremonies, and never on any joyful occasion.

The men usually dance with sword and shield in their hands, and add to the melody (or discord) by cries of "*kai kai*." Dancing in this manner is known as *grika*, and doubtless owes its origin to the old fighting days, when on occasions of public rejoicing the warriors were wont to dance and recount their deeds of valour to admiring audiences.

I will now describe some of their best known dances; some of them are known all over the hills, and others to certain sections of the tribe only.

Among the most curious is the one which takes place on the occasion of the *ganna*, the ceremony at which a *nokma* or headman assumes the elbow rings which are the marks of the position he holds. When such an event takes place, the *kamal* or priest officiates as master of ceremonies. He leads in the dance, in which he is followed by the *nokma* and the headmen of the neighbouring villages, who have been

invited to witness the solemnities. The *nokma* takes up his position behind the priest, and his wife, who holds in her left hand a brazier containing burning *sachat* (a kind of incense obtained from the *sal* tree), takes up a similar position behind her husband. Behind these three come the privileged guests, and thus, one behind the other, they dance out of the house into the village square, and thence into the house again, to and fro many times. Nobody who is not a *nokma* is allowed to join in this dance, but a number of guests are invited who sit by and watch it. On such an occasion, should the *nokma* have more than one wife, only the *jik-mamung* or principal wife is allowed to dance; the *jikgités* or concubines remain with the spectators.

The *dō°kru su°a* is a dance in which only two women take part. It is supposed to represent two doves pecking one another, and each woman takes the part of a dove. The women stand facing each other with one hand on the hip, and the elbow to the rear, to represent the bird's tail, while the other hand is raised to the forehead, with the first finger bent a little, and pointing forwards to represent the beak of the bird. The dancing consists of moving to and fro in time with the music, alternately changing the positions of the hands, and going through the pantomime of two birds pecking at each other.

The *ambré-rurua* derives its name from the *ambrétong* (the hog-plum). In this dance only two women take part, or, more correctly, they dance in pairs. One woman in each pair goes through the performance of imitating a tree which is being violently shaken to make the fruit fall, while the other follows her, and stoops while dancing, as if to pick up the fallen fruit.

The *kă-pua* is another dance of a like nature, which is intended to represent the sowing of cotton seed. After every few steps the dancers stoop, as if to place a seed in a newly made hole in the ground.

The Machi and Awé women generally dance with their arms wide apart, in line with the shoulders, but the Abengs keep their arms close to the body, bent at the elbow, the fore-arm to the front and at right angles to the body, and the fingers clenched. The closed fists are then brought up in turn to the

shoulder and again lowered to the first position, the movements being executed in time with the music.

A dance called the *dōrégata* takes place out of doors, and is common to both the Abengs and the Akawés. The men and the women revolve in concentric circles, the former outside and the latter inside. The women start with their arms to their sides, and then move them, with an upward and outward sweep, to the right and left alternately. In doing this, part of the fun seems to be to try and knock off the turbans of the men, who are not allowed to defend themselves except by tying on their headgear as tightly as possible. This dance is usually performed at the *wangala* or harvest festival.

Another dance is the *chambĭl-mésara* (the pumelo dance), in which men only take part. A pumelo is tied up in the end of a piece of cloth, which is fastened round a man's waist, and allowed to hang down behind like a tail about 2 ft. long. When beginning to dance, the man gives an impetus to the weighted cloth, so that it swings round in a circle behind him, and if he be an expert, he can keep it swinging thus by the motion of his body alone, as he keeps time with the music. I have seen the dance performed with two pumeloes, one suspended behind as above described, and the other hanging down in front from the dancer's forehead. He kept the two cloths swinging round and round at a high rate of speed without apparent effort, though he had some difficulty in starting them to swing in unison.

A few out of a number of other dances are the *ajéma*, the *matchu-rōdila*, and the *delang-rōrōa*, all of which form part of the Garo funeral ceremony.

MANUFACTURES.

I have already pointed out that the requirements of the Garos are very few and that nature has been so prodigal of her gifts to them, that they have not been obliged to take to manufacture or trade, but devote themselves almost exclusively to agriculture. They practically manufacture nothing but some cloths, a few mats and boats, and some of the most ordinary instruments of iron. The Garos of the plains to the north of



A GARO WEARING THE PANDRA OR DANCING DRESS.

the Garo Hills weave a kind of cloth known as *kancha*. It is of cotton, and usually a dark blue or red colour. It is made in three pieces, of which two are plain blue or red, about 2 ft. in breadth, sewn to a centre strip of white, which is worked in simple designs in coloured thread. The Hill Garos wear these cloths, but do not make them; they confine their endeavours to making the garments usually worn by men and women, which I have already described, the making of which demands little dexterity or taste.

For dyeing their cloth blue, the Garos grow a species of indigo, and the other colours are purchased in the markets. The indigo blue is obtained by boiling the previously chopped up leaves of the shrub, and the yarn is soaked in the resulting decoction.

For bedding and blankets the Garos prepare an article called *sĭmpak*. It is worthy of notice, not on account of its commercial value, for it has none, but because it affords an example of the extreme conservatism of the Garos, who, although they might easily purchase cheap blankets and warm clothes from the plains dealers, still adhere to the customs of their forefathers and make their bedding out of the bark of trees.

The prepared article is a reddish web or network of fibres. The trees from which it can be prepared are the *prap* (*Ficus Rumphi*), the *chram* (*Artocarpus chaplasha*), the *pakram* (*Grewia liliæ folia*), the *dimbri* (*Ficus glomerata*) and the *anisep* (*Kydia calycina*). The *pakram* yields the best and the *anisep* the worst *sĭmpak;* the branches of the last-named tree have to be heated before the bark can be stripped off.

The process of manufacture is the following. A fairly young and straight branch is cut off—the trunk of the tree is too hard and cannot be used. The branch is first subjected to a thorough pounding with a smooth stick, so as to loosen its covering. A sharp, pointed bamboo is run along the whole length of the branch under the bark, which is split open and then peeled off. Only the inner pith is used, so that, before the *sĭmpak* can be prepared, it is necessary to separate the outer layer from the inner. This is easily done and the rejected part is stripped off and thrown away. The piece of bark to be operated upon is then laid upon a smooth log and well pounded from

one end to the other with a *panĭl* or serrated mallet. When this has been done, it is doubled over lengthwise and again beaten, and the process of folding and pounding is continued until the piece of bark has been reduced to a thick mass of fibre. When it has been sufficiently pounded, the layers of fibre are unfolded, the moisture is wrung out and nothing more remains to be done but to put it in the sun to dry. Lengths are sewn together until the requisite width is attained, and as many layers as are necessary can be fastened together in like manner.

The Garos are fortunate in possessing several kinds of trees from which they can obtain good fibre. The most important is the *kĭlkra* (*Celtis orientalis*), from which they manufacture their fishing-lines and nets.

SECTION III.

LAWS AND CUSTOMS.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.

In dealing with the tribal divisions of the Garos, it will be convenient to separate them into two classes: those who inhabit the Garo Hills district, and those who reside in the plains and are scattered over a very wide area of country. I will first deal with the former, and endeavour to make it clear what part of the hills each division occupies. It should be understood that the boundaries given are only approximate, for the villages of the different divisions overlap to a considerable extent.

(1) The Akawés or Awés inhabit the whole of the northern hills and the plains at their foot, from the Kamrup border in the east, to a short distance west of the Jinari river. From the plains they extend about twenty miles southward. Some Awés claim to be distinct from the Akawés, but there can be no doubt that they are identically the same people. The Akawés are, according to the meaning of the word, "plains dwellers," and the Awés "ploughmen." The first name is assumed by the people who live in the plains to the north of the hills, and the last by the inhabitants of the valleys and low hills further south. In manners and language they are entirely alike. The name Awé, if taken in its literal meaning, is apt to be misleading, for most of the Awés cultivate land which is not fit for the plough, and practise *jhuming* like other Garos.

(2) The Chisaks occupy the north-eastern hills, from the southern border of the Awés in the north, to within a few miles

of the Someswari river in the south; and from the western border of the Khasi Hill in the east, they extend about thirty miles westward.

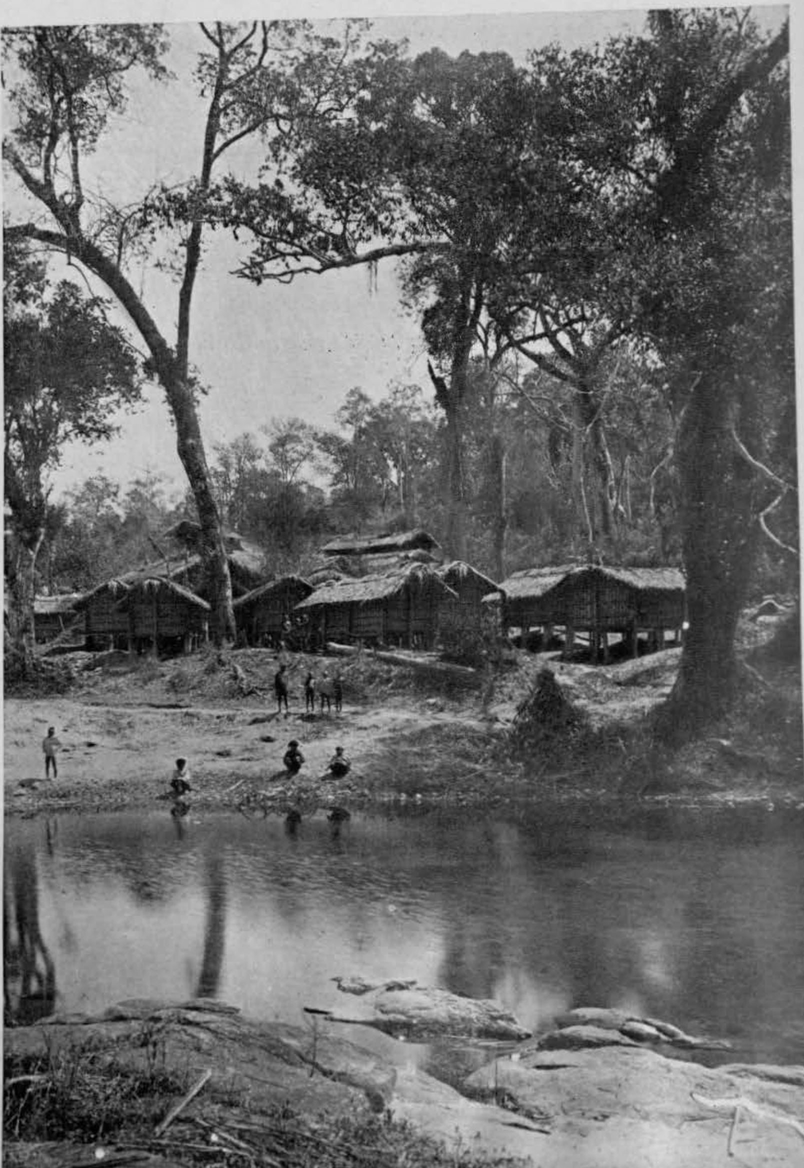
The Chisaks have much in common with the Awés, but they have some distinctive features in dress and customs which proclaim them a separate division of the tribe.

(3) Immediately to the south of the Chisaks there exists a small colony of Duals, who have their villages on the banks of the Someswari river and in the hills close to the south bank of the river where it turns towards the plains. By far the larger number of Duals are plains-dwellers, and have their homes in the district of Mymensingh.

(4) The Machis inhabit the central valley of the Someswari, to the west of the Duals, and spread northward, until they join hands with the Awés, and southward, up the northern slopes of the central range of high hills.

(5) Higher up the valley of the Someswari are the Matjanchis, or, as they are also called, the Matabengs. These people, like their neighbours the Machis, are found some distance north of the Someswari river. They claim that they are a distinct division, but their language and geographical distribution make it more than likely that in them is to be found a mingling of the Abeng and Machi.

(6) In the north-western hills, to the west of the Jinari river, there is a small division of the tribe called Kochu. These must not be confounded with the Kochs or the Atongs, who are also known as Kochu. These Kochus are scarcely to be distinguished from Awés whom they resemble in almost every particular of dress and custom. It is difficult to imagine why they claim to be other than Awés, but that they do so is certain. They have a fable that a certain ancestor talked so indistinctly that he was said, ironically, to talk like a Kochu (here Koch or foreigner is meant), and that the name has been applied to his descendants ever since. I can believe that the name has some such derivation and that no difference really exists between the Kochus and the Awés. Only seven villages of these Kochus exist, so that even numerically, they are insignificant. Hamilton mentions that "The tribe bordering on Mechpara and Kalumalupara, that occupies the high



IN DARENGGIRI VILLAGE ON THE NITAI RIVER.

mountains and retains entire independence is the Kochuna-sindiya." From his reference to the neighbouring plains, it might be presumed that he referred to the Kochus whom I have just been discussing, although they do not inhabit high hills, but the outlying northern hills which are none of them of any great elevation. I have made many inquiries as to who the Kochunasindiyas really were, for the name does not seem to be used now. As far as I have been able to gather the name refers to the Koches proper, and not to a division of the Garos. I have heard an old Garo mention "Rabhanasindiyas," who, he declared, lived in just about the tract of country referred to by Hamilton, and had since left the hills and taken up their residence in the plains. Some Koches still inhabit the high land bordering on Kalumalupara *pargana*, and the outmost line of hills on the western and part of the southern borders of the district. In dealing more fully with these people, in the chapter on affinities, I have pointed to the possibility that at one time the Koches may have lived much further within the hills than they do at present.

(7) The Atiagras form another small and unimportant section of the Garo tribe. They live to the south of the Kochus, and appear to bear the same relationship to the Abengs that the Kochus have with the Awés.

(8) By far the most important division of the tribe within the Garo Hills is that of the Abengs, who occupy the whole of the western hills and the greater part of the country to the south of the central range, as far east as the Bogai river. A small colony also inhabits the south-eastern hills not far from the Khasi Hills boundary. These appear to have migrated from further west in quite modern times, and are still able to give the names of their parent villages.

(9) Immediately to the east of the Abengs, in the upper valley of the Bogai river, and extending eastward almost to the Nitai river, are the Chiboks.

(10) To the south of the Chiboks, in the low hills bordering on the Mymensingh district in the vicinity of Dalu, reside the Rugas.

(11) The country to the south of the main range, and extending from the Nitai river nearly to the Someswari river,

is inhabited by the Ganchings, or as they are also called, Garas.

(12) An important division of the tribe, the Atongs, occupy the Someswari valley, and the hills in its vicinity as far north as Siju.

In this neighbourhood there also resides another tribe, of which only a few members inhabit the Garo Hills. I refer to the Megams or Lynngams, as they are called in the neighbouring districts of the Khasi Hills. They seem to represent a fusion of the Garo and the Khasi, and should be looked upon as a hybrid race. In appearance and customs they closely resemble the Garos, but their language has been classified by Dr. Grierson as Khasi, and is absolutely unintelligible to the ordinary Garo. This tribe has been dealt with by Major Gurdon in his monograph on the Khasis, so I need do little more than mention a few of the more prominent characteristics which prove their kinship with the Garos.

The Megams are to be found on the eastern border of the Garo Hills district, from Kamrup in the north to Mymensingh in the south; they also inhabit the valley of the Rongkai stream and the valleys around the foot of Chikmang and Balpakram mountains. Their tribal organization is similar to that of the Garos, and amongst them there exist the same exogamous divisions, viz. Sangma and Marak, as are found among the Garos. They further resemble the Garos in their readiness to eat almost every kind of animal food, although there are a few things of which they will not partake which the Garos greatly appreciate. They burn their dead, as the Garos do, but, unlike them, are accustomed to keep the corpses in their houses for some time before cremation. Inter-marriage between Garos and Megams is not rare, but from a Garo point of view, such an alliance is not looked upon with favour.

In his "Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal," Col. Dalton mentions a people called the "Nuñyas," who, he says "are the clan immediately to the west of the Khasias; but the Nunyas are more Khasia than Garo." Nuniya is the name applied to the Megams by the Assamese of Boko in the Kamrup district.

Outside their hills, the Garos reside in greatest numbers in

the Mymensingh district. They occupy the whole of the north of that district, but many of them also live further south and extend even into the Dacca district. Among them are to be found most of the divisions that exist in the hills, the Abengs, Chisaks, Duals, Ganchings and Atongs all being represented. Besides these, there are other divisions not known in the hills, such as the Braks, Jariadongs, Sōmons, Galnés and Malongs. In most cases they retain their own language and customs, but naturally they have acquired many foreign ways, and are practically bi-lingual like their brethren in the plains of Goalpara.

In the Goalpara district, there are a number of widely scattered Garo villages. Most of these lie close to the Garo Hills border, but others have been established on the opposite bank of the Brahmaputra. The inhabitants of these are all Akawés.

In Kamrup, on the border between that district and the Khasi Hills, there exists a colony of Garos known as the Hana Garos. According to their own traditions, they are the direct descendants of the Garos who entered Assam in the days of Arambit Raja. They assert that he married the daughter of one of the Garo chiefs, and their daughter, Nini-Hana by name, is believed to be their ancestress. According to Mr. Gait, the Hanas "are said to be descended from a man who speared an elephant;" in such a case the name would be of Assamese origin.

Besides the Hana Garos there exist two other divisions in the Kamrup district, the Damelia Garos—who, like the Hanas, speak a language which is almost exactly the same as Awé—and the Baragharias, who appear to be more akin to the Megams, and have in them and their language a strong admixture of the Khasi element. I have taken these last two names from Mr. Gait's census report, but I am told that among themselves they prefer the appellation of A°chik, which is common to all Garos.

These Kamrup Garos hold the same belief regarding their origin as the rest of the tribe, and do not admit that they are descended from emigrants from the hills.

The Garos of the Khasi Hills are for the most part Machis,

Chisaks, and Atongs, and I know of no other divisions of which mention has not already been made.

Before I leave the subject of the geographical divisions which I have described, I must add in a few words the legend which explains how these divisions came to exist. After the arrival of the Garos in the hills, there arose a line of very powerful rulers who practically made slaves of their people. These rulers appointed certain tasks to their subjects, which, becoming hereditary, separated the performers from the rest of their fellow countrymen and eventually resulted in the whole tribe being divided up into different divisions. The Abengs, for instance, were told off as pickers of cotton; the Garas to carve out pig-troughs; the Kochus to prepare dried fish; and the Chisaks to collect edible bamboo shoots.

Besides the geographical divisions named, the Garos are divided into three *katchis* or exogamous septs or clans, viz. Momin, Marak, and Sangma. The first is entirely confined to the Akawés (and Awés), but the other two are distributed among all the geographical divisions, no matter how much they may differ from one another in language and custom, or whether they reside in the hills or in the plains.

I have made many endeavours to ascertain how these septs first originated, but have not been able to form any definite opinion. I have heard it suggested that they are of totemistic origin, but I cannot support this theory, for I do not know of any tale of totemistic origin which will apply to a whole clan. Some Garos declare that at one time they were all Momins, and that the other exogamous groups were formed by persons who left the parent colony and settled by themselves in distant places. The process of adding to the number of these clans is even now in progress, and Ebang, Areng and Sira are named by some as independent exogamous groups. That they are not yet really independent may be proved by asking a man belonging to one of these *katchis* whether he may marry a Marak, a Sangma, or a Momin. A man of the Ebang *katchi*, for instance, will certainly say no, if asked if he may marry a Momin, which proves that he really belongs to that clan. In process of time, however, I have no doubt that these last-named *katchis* will entirely sever themselves from the

parent clans, and that their members will intermarry with the old stock as if it were one of the septs with which marriage is lawful.

We now come to the last subdivision of the tribe, namely, the *machong*. The *machong* was originally a family, but it has long outgrown the narrow bounds of such a classification. A better translation of the term is "motherhood" (a word which I have borrowed from Col. Dalton), for all the members of a *machong* claim to be descended from a common mother or ancestress. Descent in a motherhood must naturally be in the mother's line, and a child belongs to the mother's *machong*, and not to that of the father, whose family is barely recognized. The number of these *machongs* is infinite, but the names of some of the best known will be found in Appendix A.

The origin of these divisions is more easily traced than that of the larger clans. In many cases it is totemistic: in others, it is founded on a popular tale, and in yet others, the motherhood has merely adopted the name of a stream or hill in the vicinity of which its members settled. Whole families probably broke away from their associates and formed new communities of their own, assuming new names to distinguish them from the stock from which they came.

When I say that the origin of these *machongs* is often totemistic, I must qualify the statement by adding that it is a modified form of totemism; for although a *machong* may consider itself to be descended from some animal, in no case have I found that that animal was treated with respect or reverence.

The following are some of the stories which the Garos tell about the origin of their *machongs*.

The Rangsan *machong* of the Marak *katchi* has for totem the bear. The fable is, that one day a bear left the forest carrying a basket of good things to eat. He first met two women of the Momin and Sangma *katchis*, who asked him the price of his wares. He answered "not for silver or gold will I sell them, but for a wife only." Neither of the women would marry him, and he went on his way until he met a girl of the Marak *katchi*. She consented to buy his goods at the price he named. They married, but her family were so incensed at the unnatural union, that they killed the bear. Nevertheless, the woman had

issue and her descendants of the Rangsan *machong* have the bear for totem, and are the "children of the bear."

The Naringré-dō°kru *machong* of the Momin *katchi* have the dove as totem, and base their origin on a version of a tale which I give elsewhere. It relates how a little girl was shut up naked in a shed by her mother because she was naughty. Being ashamed of her nakedness, she asked some children who were playing near by to give her some feathers, fire and wax. By means of hot wax, she stuck the feathers all over her body, and turning into a dove, was able to fly out. This girl became the founder of the dove *machong*.

The Drokgré *machong* of the Marak *katchi* have the hen as totem, for their ancestress had a wonderful ornament, which could cluck like a hen (in Garo, the clucking of a hen is expressed by the sound drok-drok-drok), so her descendants have assumed the name of Drokgré.

The Koknal *machong* of the Sangma *katchi* derives its name from the fact that the "grandmother" of the clan, as the Garos term their ancestress, was a very rich old woman, who for the sake of her wealth, was carried off in a *kok* or Garo basket.

Examples of names being borrowed from rivers or natural features of the country are to be found in the Dō°bakkol and Wasra *machongs* of the Sangma *katchi*, which derive their names, the first, from the famous Dō°bakkol or "Bats' cave" near Siju, and the second, from the Wasra stream, on the bank of which the *machong* of that name resided.

MARRIAGE.

In theory, marriage is strictly exogamous among the Garos, and husband and wife must belong to different septs and motherhoods. Thus a Sangma cannot marry a Sangma, a Marak a Marak, or a Momin a Momin. The children invariably belong to the mother's sept and motherhood. Great importance is attached to this rule, and those who break it, and marry within their own clan are considered to have committed a social sin. No particular taboo or ostracism, however, appears to follow such an act, and I am told that many persons are breaking away from the old custom, and that nearly 10 per cent.

of marriages, nowadays, are in violation of the rules of exogamous marriage. Some persons even go so far as to marry within their own motherhood, though this breach of the rule is rarer than the first, and is looked upon with proportionate disapproval by the more orthodox.

Except in the case hereafter mentioned, proposals of marriage must always come from the woman and not from the man. The girl does not herself arrange the engagement, but indicates her choice, and enlists the services of her father, uncle, or brother to bring about the alliance. Among the Abengs and Matabengs, it is the custom for a man to refuse at first to marry the girl who has sought his hand, and to run away and hide himself. A party of friends seek for, and bring him back by force—and apparently very unwilling—to the village, whence he usually escapes. He is captured a second time, but should he run away a third time, it is taken for granted that he really does not wish to marry the girl, and he is allowed to go free. I have known this custom to form the subject of judicial proceedings, for a man appeared in court one day, at Tura, and filed a petition in which he claimed compensation from the father of a girl for having failed to give him his daughter in marriage. The complainant explained that he had been chosen by the girl, but according to custom, he had refused to marry her and had run away. To his disgust, nobody came to seek for him, and the girl chose and married another man who was less strict in his ideas of Garo etiquette.

The preliminaries having been arranged, it is the custom among some of the divisions of the tribe for the bride-elect to live in the house of a bridegroom's parents (he himself lives in the *nokpanté*) for a month or more before the date fixed upon for the marriage. She works for them and they become mutually acquainted.

Among the Machis, a different mode of making a proposal is in vogue, which is known as *chadila*. The girl about to make a proposal, cooks a dish of rice, and sends it to the man of her choice in the *nokpanté*, by his sister or some other female relation. The girl follows close behind, but remains in hiding in order to avoid the mortification of being present should he refuse to eat the food, which he would do if he were

not willing to accept the offer. Should he commence to eat the food, the girl comes forward from her place of concealment and eats with him. If the man refuses to eat, the girl does not necessarily give him up, but having found out where he sleeps, she goes to him late at night, and lies down by his side. If the man is still obdurate, he usually leaves the village for a time, but if he relents, he becomes the girl's husband from that night without further ceremony. It is a point of honour that on such an occasion, the man shall not make the slightest advance of an immoral nature.

Among the Atongs, the girl goes to the house of her *fiancé's* parents for a term of probation; she does not present him with a bowl of rice, but on the appointed date goes through the regular ceremony which I shall describe when dealing with the religious aspect of Garo marriage. Among these people there also exists another custom. On the occasion of certain great festivals, it is an unwritten law that the young girls and men may sleep together after the entertainment is over, and the partnership of one night is expected to precede a life-long union. It is not absolutely necessary that they should thereafter live as man and wife, and no obloquy is incurred by the girl on account of her lapse from the path of virtue, unless she is found later to be an expectant mother. It must be added that this custom is no longer in favour, and is discountenanced by the more respectable.

I have mentioned that there is an exception to the rule that a girl may choose her husband. This exception occurs when one daughter of a family is given in marriage to the son of her father's sister. Should she not have such a cousin, she must marry a man of her father's "motherhood," who is chosen for a substitute. The daughter's husband then becomes his father-in-law's *nokrom*, a term which I have fully explained in the chapter on inheritance. When a girl is thus given in marriage to her cousin, the couple take up their abode with the former's parents. At the death of his father-in-law the *nokrom* marries the widow, thus assuming the anomalous position of husband to both mother and daughter.

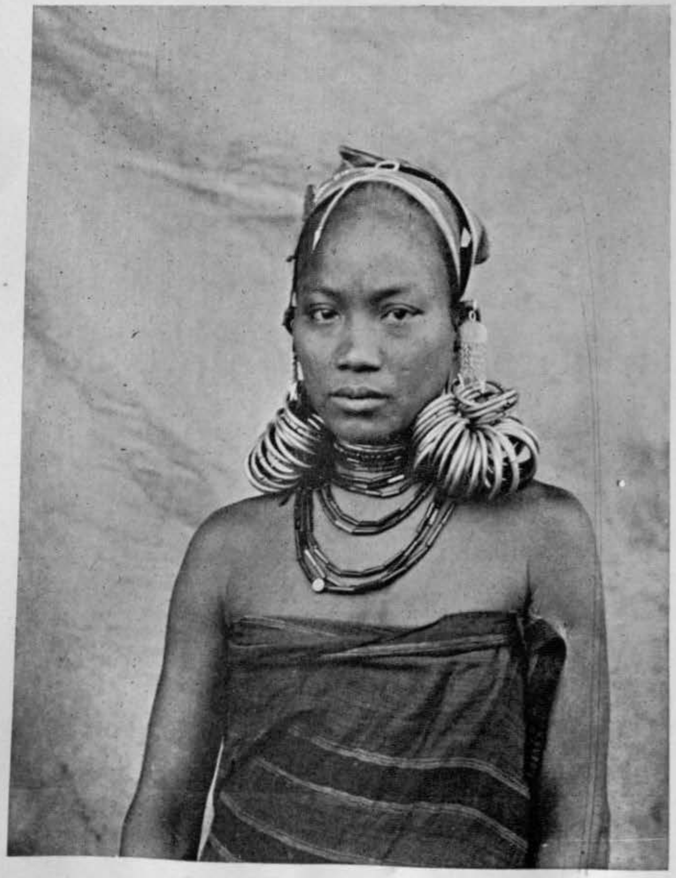
When there is no *nokrom* for a widow to marry, she is governed by the law of *akim*, which lays down that a widow or

widower may not marry again without the permission of the family of the deceased husband or wife, and then, only into their respective motherhoods. The law is especially hard on the women. They are the owners of all property, and the relations of a deceased husband will often keep his widow waiting for years for a mere child. By the time the child is of marriageable age, the woman is already old. In such a case, the young husband is always allowed to marry a young girl as well, so the widow is kept unmarried for years for the sake of her property.

In 1883 fifty women of the Someswari valley appeared in court at Tura and applied to be relieved from the operation of this law. Their prayer was acceded to, and *akim* is no longer officially recognized, though still generally obeyed by the people.

A man may marry as many wives as he likes, but three is usually the maximum. He may marry two sisters, but he must marry the elder before the younger. Before taking a second wife, it is customary for a man to obtain the permission of the first, and a breach of this rule entitles her to compensation. The second wife may be of a different clan from that of the first, but it is more usual for her to belong to the same sept and "motherhood." The chief wife is called *jik-mamung* or *jik-mongma* (the first name means principal wife, and the second elephant-wife) and the others are known as *jik-gité*, which is equivalent to "concubine." There is not the smallest shame attached to the last name, for all are looked upon as lawfully married, but the *jik-mamung* takes precedence of the others. When a man marries his uncle's widow, she is always *jik-mamung*, even though he may have married her daughter before her. A widow may refuse to marry her husband's nephew, but if she does so and marries another man, the nephew may claim compensation from both of them.

No money is ever paid as the price of the bride or bridegroom, nor does it appear to be the custom to give any presents to either party, except sometimes in the case of the son of a wealthy man or a *nokma*. Such a person may receive from his parents a sword, shield and spear, and perhaps a cow or a bull. At a man's death, his widow is expected to return to his



AN ABENG WOMAN, A LASKAR'S WIFE.

having been administered, the priest takes a sword, chopper, or spear, strikes a tree with it, and calls upon it as a son of the Earth to be a witness to the oath which has just been taken. The weapon used is provided by the man whose marriage is being annulled, and becomes the perquisite of the officiating priest. Although the above is the orthodox manner of consummating a divorce, I am doubtful if it is often resorted to and believe that it is more common nowadays for the injured party to seek redress in court, or to apply to his *laskar* for compensation as well as dissolution of marriage.

Compensation, when divorce is not by mutual consent, is fixed by custom at from sixty to one hundred rupees. In old times the price of a divorce was the value of a *dakmanda* (a black cloth, in shape like an Assamese *mekela*) and a *rang* or brass gong. Those days have long passed away, and a substantial sum of money is now generally claimed. Instead of paying money, the person seeking a divorce may offer a substitute. The husband or wife thus given in exchange must belong to the same clan and motherhood as the person whose place is taken.

INHERITANCE.

The system which divides the Garo tribe into certain clans and "motherhoods," the members of which trace back their descent to a common ancestress, and which has laid down that descent in the clan shall be through the mother and not through the father, also provides that inheritance shall follow the same course, and shall be restricted to the female line. No man may possess property, unless he has acquired it by his own exertions. No man can inherit property under any circumstance whatever.

The law of inheritance may be briefly stated to be, that property once in a motherhood, cannot pass out of it. A woman's children are all of her *machong*, and therefore it might at first appear that her son would satisfy the rule; but he must marry a woman of another clan, and his children would be of their mother's sept, so that, if he inherited his mother's property, it would pass out of her *machong* in the second generation. The daughter must therefore inherit, and her

daughter after her, or, failing issue, another woman of the clan appointed by some of its members.

I will give some examples of how this rule works. A woman dies and leaves her property to her daughter; that daughter dies without issue, and before her husband. He cannot inherit his wife's possessions, but his wife's relations must provide him with another wife of the same *machong* as the deceased woman. The daughter of the second wife would satisfy the rule, and would ensure the possession of the property by the first wife's *machong*.

Should a woman be unfaithful to her husband, and he divorce her, she would not be allowed to retain possession of the family property and her husband would have no right to it. Here, as in the case of a widower, another wife would be chosen for the husband, and through her he would continue to enjoy the use of his first wife's belongings.

In spite of the above rule, during the lifetime of a woman's husband, he has full use of her property. He cannot will it away, but otherwise his authority with regard to it is unquestioned. For instance, a *nokma* is always looked upon as the owner of the lands of his village, and though he must have derived his rights through his wife, she is never considered, unless it is found convenient that her name should be mentioned in litigation. From this, it will be seen that matriarchy in the strict sense of the word does not exist among the Garos. A woman is merely the vehicle by which property descends from one generation to another.

Although a man cannot inherit property, his *machong* assumes a right to control what his wife has brought him. In order that the control shall not die out in the event, for instance, of the husband's death, he has the right to choose a male member of his clan to represent him. This representative is known as his *nokrom*. He is not an heir, for as a male he cannot inherit, and the person whose *nokrom* he is has nothing to leave, but he is the channel through which the "motherhood," of the husband maintains its hold on the property of the wife. When possible, this *nokrom* is the son of the man's sister, and he is expected to marry his uncle's daughter, and the widow also when his uncle dies. In the

event of there being no sister's son, a member of the man's *machong* is adopted as *nokrom*.

This *nokrom* is looked upon as the support of the family after the death of the senior member. The name itself signifies this, for it is derived from the two words *nok*, house, and *krong*, post. He marries one of the daughters, takes up his abode with her people, and becomes responsible for his adopted family as soon as its natural protector can no longer provide for it. With the advent of the *nokrom*, it may be said that a dual control is exercised over all property, the balance being in favour of the wife's *machong*.

ADOPTION.

With the exception of the adoption of a *nokrom* in the absence of a sister's son, there is no adoption among the Garos.

TENURE OF LAND.

With the exception of the highest slopes of the central range, all lands within the Garo Hills are divided up among widely separated villages, each of which has clearly defined and well-known boundaries.

Land is subject to the ordinary laws of inheritance, and really belongs to the wife of the *nokma* or headman of each village. He, however, is always thought of and spoken of as the proprietor. Land may be, and frequently is, sold by a *nokma*, but can only be so disposed of with the permission of his wife and her *machong* or motherhood.

All the inhabitants of a village are entitled to cultivate whatever land they require, and may cultivate wherever they choose within the village boundary. A stranger who comes into the village to settle, is also permitted to take up land, but he must give a small present or quit-rent called *hawil* or *a°kĭmĭl*, to the *nokma*. This quit-rent may be levied in two ways, either as a payment in money when a stranger first takes up his residence in a village, or as an annual rent. The first form is usual in the case of single individuals, and the latter when a whole hamlet migrates to a new site on the land

of another village, and it is feared that its inhabitants may set up a claim to be an independent village. The quit-rent may also be paid in kind, in the shape of rice, fowls, liquor, etc.

Several acts, insignificant in themselves, are looked upon by the Garos as attempts at usurpation, and are deeply resented and actively opposed. One of these is the purchase by a stranger of a *kram* or big drum. Another is the performance on another *nokma's* land, and without his permission, of the *ganna* or ceremony of assuming *jaksils*, or elbow rings which are the emblems of a *nokma*. A third is the offering of sacrifice at the *asong* or sacrificial stones outside every large village. Such acts quickly lead to litigation, for the *nokmas* guard most jealously their rights to even the smallest patches of jungle, and are unceasing in their efforts to uphold them.

It is the custom for a successful party in litigation to celebrate a victory by giving a feast, to which the opposite party replies with another in defiance. The first party then endeavours to eclipse its opponents in a feast of yet greater magnificence, and this goes on until the entertainments assume great proportions, and prove a ruinous tax on the means of the litigants.

DECISION OF DISPUTES.

Since the annexation of the Garo Hills by the British Government, a body of men called *laskars* has been formed, who act as a kind of rural police and also as honorary magistrates. They are empowered to deal with all minor matters and settle unimportant disputes. They do this by calling together meetings of villagers, in which they sit as presidents and give final decisions. Their powers do not exceed those of inflicting fines and awarding compensation to injured parties. This is but an adaptation of the ancient usages of the people, for in former times, the village met in conference to decide any matter in dispute between its members. When in these meetings evidence could not be adduced, recourse was, and is yet had to trial by ordeal. This is of two kinds, the *sĭl-sō°a*, or ordeal of hot iron, and the *chōkéla-sō°a*, or ordeal of boiling water. In the first-named ordeal a piece of metal is brought to the *kamal* or priest, to

whom a small fee is paid for the trouble of heating it. When the iron is red-hot, he administers an oath to the person to be examined, and informs him that no harm will come to him if he has sworn truly, but warns him of the consequences of a lie. The person who is to undergo the ordeal then stretches out one hand before him, with palm upturned. The priest lays upon it some pieces of cotton, on these some jack-tree leaves, and on the top of all the red-hot metal. The man is made to close his hand, and the hot iron is then drawn through it. The second ordeal, that of boiling water, is conducted in the following manner. An egg is placed in a deep pot of boiling water, and the person whose veracity is to be tested, is asked to plunge in his hand and pick it out. It is believed that if the truth has been told, the person who is submitting to either ordeal will suffer no harm, but if he has lied, his hand will be badly burned or scalded.

It is said that in olden days one method of testing a man's veracity was to tie him to a tree and leave him out in the jungle all night. If he was still alive the next morning and had not been devoured by a tiger, he was supposed to have spoken the truth, but the tiger was sure to come his way if the opposite was the case. The principle is still observed, but a bullock or a fowl takes the place of the human being.

When possible, the bank of a stream is chosen for such trials. A flat piece of ground is cleared on which to light the fire for heating the metal or water.

The Garo oath is a long one, and consists, first, of a declaration of the truth of the coming statement, and then of calling down upon the speaker all the worst evils that can be imagined, should he speak falsely. An oath is taken on the biting of a tiger's tooth, which is a symbol for "if I have spoken falsely may my death be caused by such a tooth as this." Meteoric stones are likewise used, the oath sworn on them being "may Gōéra (the god of lightning) kill me with one of these if I have told a lie." Yet another form of taking an oath is to cut off the head of a fowl, and run a sharp slip of bamboo from one side of the head to the other through the eyes. The person taking the oath bites this head and calls down upon his own eyes a like destruction if his word is false.

They will sometimes take earth in their mouths and swear by that also, that their statements are true.

In their disputes, the Garos have nearly always one of two objects in view, namely the obtaining of land, or compensation. Their claims for the latter are never ending, and are made on the slenderest pretexts. For instance, I have known a young woman to come to court and demand compensation because her mother had been guilty of immoral behaviour. With an equal show of right a man has claimed compensation owing to the misconduct of his brother's wife. The habit does not appear to be a new one, for in Mackenzie's "North-East Frontier of Bengal" I find the following remarks on the subject of *dai*, as it is called in their language. "Many troublesome cases still arise out of old blood-feuds and existing customs which can only be decided by a panchayat of hill-men. The most remarkable of these customs is that of *dai* or compensation. Under this custom the village headmen demand large sums for wearing the *tar*, an iron ring on the arm, which is regarded as the badge of respectability. The villagers are now very unwilling to pay these dues. 'Every Garo's life' says the Deputy Commissioner 'is spent in giving (or refusing) and demanding *dai*. A man's great grandfather was killed fifty years ago, he demands *dai* from the hands of the heir of the murderer, and if it be not paid, his heir will still demand it in turn and so on until it is paid.'"

Compromises between disputants are effected by each in turn taking hold of the other's wrist and declaring publicly that he has no further ground for complaint. This is called *jak-gitok sika*. They will then often drink from the same cup and bite the same piece of a grass known as *dika*.

HEAD HUNTING.

Very little is known of the state of affairs existing within the Garo Hills before the tract was taken over and administered by Government. Less than half a century ago, the Garos were looked upon as cruel and blood-thirsty savages, who inhabited a tract of hills covered with almost impenetrable jungle, the climate of which was considered so deadly as to make it

impossible for a white man to live there. The Garos were notorious as the perpetrators of numerous raids into the plains at the foot of their hills in the districts of Goalpara and Mymensingh. On each occasion a number of defenceless *ryots* were killed, but it was rarely possible to bring the offenders to book owing to the difficulty experienced in moving troops through such a densely wooded tract of mountainous country.

A full and interesting account of the relations between these people and their neighbours in Goalpara and Mymensingh is to be found in Mackenzie's "North-East Frontier of Bengal," and from this work it appears that the raids were not always entirely unprovoked. The Garos then, as now, were accustomed to bring down the produce of their fields for sale in the various markets established at the main passes or outlets of the valleys which run into the hills. These passes were guarded by zemindars, who, by the exaction of imposts and tolls, sometimes so exasperated the hill-men, that they had recourse to violence to avenge their wrongs. These raids became so frequent that in 1866 it was decided that a British officer should take up his residence in the Garo Hills with a police force of sufficient strength to maintain order.

Lieut. Williamson was the first Deputy Commissioner of the Garo Hills, and within a wonderfully short time he quieted the people, checked their raiding propensities and turned them into peaceful and law-abiding subjects.

The first few years of our administration of the Garo Hills furnished ample proof that besides raiding a common foe in the plains, the Garos were also addicted to internal warfare, and that many blood-feuds existed between individuals and villages. The latter, which were much bigger than they now are, were all protected by *chevaux de frise* of sharp pointed bamboo stakes, and the main approaches were carefully guarded. When opportunity offered for a successful raid on an enemy's village, it was quickly taken advantage of and the heads of the victims were borne home in triumph as coveted trophies.

The raids made by the Garos on each other and on the plains' people, were not always the outcome of feuds or to avenge a wrong. The death of a *nokma* often called for a sacrifice, and if a slave was not forthcoming in the village it was often

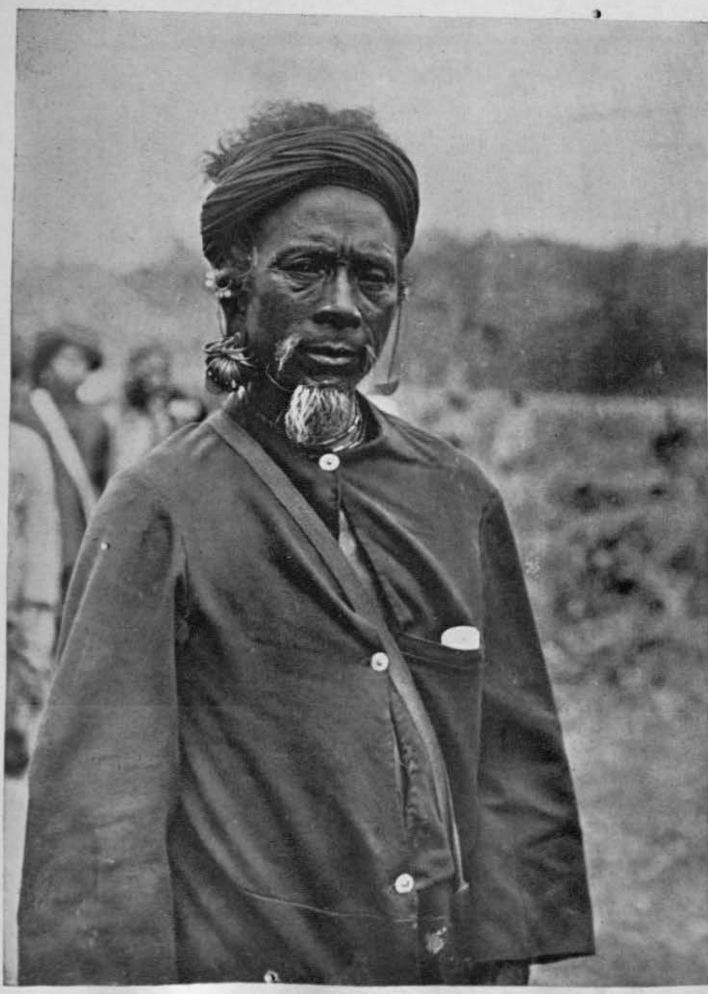
necessary to procure a victim elsewhere, and the chance of capturing a harmless Bengali cultivator who was not able to defend himself, must on such occasions have been a great temptation to them. The return of a successful foraying party to its village was heralded by great rejoicings, in which dancing and drinking were essential features.

After an attack on a village, if the distance was not too great, the victim was sometimes carried home to the raiders' village, otherwise, only the head was taken. In the former case it was customary to lay the body on a *ganchi* or funeral pyre, round which the people danced. The body was then decapitated, and the hands and feet were cut off. The latter were then taken to the outskirts of the village, and placed in holes in the ground in which *mandal* trees (*Erithrina suberosa*) were afterwards planted. In some cases, instead of burying the hands, they were fastened to bamboos with the fingers outspread. These bamboos were then stuck into the ground by the side of the path leading to the next village, as if to warn strangers not to approach. The corpse after having been thus mutilated, was burnt, and the skull was hung up in the latrine of the house of the taker of the trophy.

It was not until 1876 that the last trace of the head-hunting proclivities of the Garos disappeared. In the resolution on the annual report for that year I find it stated that the Deputy Commissioner was able while in camp at Rongrengiri, to settle a number of blood-feuds, and no less than 200 skulls, the remains of victims killed in former raids, or murdered in various ways, were surrendered and publicly burnt.

If questioned on the subject, Garos deny that head-hunting was common to all of their tribe, and assert that it was confined to the Machi division, but I am convinced that in most villages in the hills skulls were to be found, for it does not seem to be possible that the numerous raids we read of were committed by a small section of the tribe who inhabit the very heart of the country.

I have mentioned the strange place in which the Garos chose to exhibit their trophies. It is still the place in which the trophies of the chase and parts of the skulls of sacrificed animals ar



AN OLD LASKAR.

A reference to the blood revenge of of the Garos many years ago is to be found in Gomme's "Ethnology and Folklore" and is as follows: "The blood revenge of the Garos of India is marked by a practice very little in advance of this" (*i.e.* the New-Ireland custom of partaking of a composition of sago, cocoanut, and human brains). "Upon a quarrel ensuing, both parties plant a tree bearing a sour fruit, and make a solemn vow that they will avail themselves of the first opportunity that offers, to eat its fruit with the juice of his antagonist's head. The party who eventually succeeds in revenging himself upon his antagonist, cuts off his head, summons his friends, with whom he boils the head along with the fruit of the tree and portions out the mixed juice to them and drinks of it himself. The tree is then cut down and the feud is at an end."

It must be many years ago that such a barbarous practice was in vogue, and the invariable reticence of the people in such matters has made it very difficult to verify the above reference, but I have found a few Garos who professed to have heard of such a custom.

SECTION IV.

RELIGION.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF POPULAR BELIEFS.

LIKE all animistic religions, that of the Garos consists of the belief in a multitude of beneficent and malevolent spirits. To some is attributed the creation of the world, to others the control of natural phenomena; and the destinies of man from birth to death are governed by a host of divinities whose anger must be appeased by sacrifice, and whose good offices must be entreated in like manner.

They believe in the existence in man of a spirit which, after death, wends its way to an appointed place, there to dwell for a period of time before being re-incarnated. A certain conception of punishment and reward hereafter is not wanting in their beliefs, for sin in one life affects the form of incarnation in the next. The lowest form of re-incarnation is that in the shape of insects and plants. The next highest is in the shape of animals and birds, and then that in human form. The greatest reward for a virtuous life is to be born into the same motherhood as before.

In commencing with a short mythology of their principal spirits, I must call attention to the fact that each spirit is known by several names, and that it seems to depend on circumstances which of these names is used. The length of the names is remarkable; in most cases they are double, and very often they bear the teknonymous affixes for father and mother.

(1) Tatara-Rabuga is the creator, at whose command the world was made by two lesser spirits, Nostu-Nōpantu and Machi.

He is looked upon as the greatest of the spirits, and his own special mission with regard to the welfare of man, is the curing of wasting diseases such as *kala-azar* and other persistent fevers. He is known by eight other names, viz. Stura-Pantura, Jipjini-Jipjana, Kuradok-Kurapin, Chandasi-Gongongrigipa, Bulgipa-Imbanggipa, Ajanjan-Buljanjan, Sekira-Balira, and Jamanok-gipa-Janginibiambi. A sacrifice to him is an expensive matter, for a bull, a goat, and a fowl must be slaughtered in his honour; liquor provided for two days' consumption by the worshippers, and rice also for them to eat.

(2) Chorabudi is a benign spirit, the protector of the crops Before partaking of the firstfruits of the season, such as Indian corn, millet, and melons, a small quantity of some of these is always presented as an offering to him. He is also sacrificed to for pains in the ears and for boils. He is the servant of Tatara-Rabuga, and when the latter is sacrificed to, a pig must also be offered to Chorabudi.

(3) Nostu-Nōpantu is the deity who, at the command ot Tatara-Rabuga, fashioned the Earth with the help of another spirit named Machi. No offering is made to these two, for they do no harm to man.

(4) Saljong is the god of fertility. He is represented by the sun, and is worshipped because all crops are in his care, and without his favour no harvests would be reaped. The great festival of the year, the Wangala, is celebrated in his honour, but the actual sacrifice to him is offered in the fields before the village festival begins. A cock is killed, its blood is sprinkled on the sacrificial altar, a little liquor is poured out on the ground in front of it, and the worshipper then returns to the village for the Wangala rejoicings. The spirit is also known by the names Tengsugipa-Tengtotgipa, Salgira, Salgra, and Rengra-Balsa.

(5) Gōéra is the god of strength, and the causer of thunder and lightning. He is prayed to for health and strength after long illnesses. He is always sacrificed to at the foot of a tree, and a pig, a fowl or a duck must be offered up. When a tree has been blasted by lightning, it is said that Gōéra has struck it, and a sacrifice must be offered at the foot of that tree in order that harm may not come to the houses in the vicinity.

(6) Kalkamé is Gōéra's brother. He is the spirit who holds in his hands the lives of all men. He is prayed to in the Asongtata or Asongroka ceremony, and is entreated to keep the people of the village safe from all dangers of the forest during the coming year. The *asong*, or sacrificial stones, are erected in his honour, and devil-driving is done in his name. For a sacrifice to this spirit, a goat or a cock must be slain. The offering is made on the sacrificial stones, which are smeared with the blood of the victim.

(7) Susimé is the giver of riches and the causer and curer of blindness and lameness. She is represented by the moon. A pig, a fowl and some liquor must be offered to her.

(8) Asima-Dingsima is the mother of Susimé. She does not appear to have any particular attributes, and is not sacrificed to, but a superstition exists that it is very unlucky to pronounce her name; the idea being apparently that Susimé will not like it. Other names for this spirit are Norekbak-Norekdim, Sonakalé-Kaburanché, and Mikrongitok-Kishang-sitok.

(9) Nawang is an evil spirit who devours the souls of men on their way to the Garo purgatory. He also endeavours to devour living men, and in order to do so, roams the world over, sometimes in human form and sometimes in that of the Maldengong, a mythical animal. He also causes pains in the stomach, vomiting and diarrhœa, and is often present at a man's death-bed ready to devour him when he is dead. A mortal carrying a weapon of iron is perfectly safe, but sometimes the demon borrows it, and can work his wicked will after throwing it to a distance.

On the subject of the creation of the world the Garos have a quaint belief which is worth relating.

In the beginning, what is now the Earth was a vast watery plain. There was no land, and darkness was over everything.

Tatara-Rabuga determined to create the Earth, so he sent a lesser spirit, Nostu-Nōpantu, in the shape of a woman, to carry out his will. There was no dry place for her to set foot on, so she took up her abode in a spider's web which was stretched over the water. Tatara-Rabuga gave her for material a handful

of sand, but when she set about her task she found that she could not make the particles stick together. So she sent the big crab down under the water to fetch some clay, but it was too deep, and he was obliged to return with his errand unfulfilled. Nostu then sent Chipongnokma-Balponggitel, the small crab, to do her behest, but he was afraid, and returned without having performed his errand. Last of all, Nostu chose Chiching-Barching, a beetle, and sent him down, and he returned with a lump of clay, with the aid of which Nostu-Nōpantu fashioned the Earth.

She created the Earth, which was called Mané-Pilté, and the big rocks Mojar, and the little rocks Dinjar, but all was still wet and unfit to walk upon. So Nostu prayed Tatara-Rabuga to help her, and he placed the sun in the sky, and the moon, and sent wind, and the three between them dried up and hardened the surface of the Earth.

Then Tatara gave the earth a *riking* or petticoat (the Earth is spoken of as a woman) and a *pagri* made of clouds, and caused hair to grow on her in the shape of the *prap* tree (*Ficus Rumphi*), the *bolong*, the *sawé* (sago palm), the *réjok* and *ré* (kinds of cane), and the *ampang* (thatching grass).

Of the animals which Tatara created, the first was the hulock ape, and his mission on earth was to utter loud cries and prevent Mané (the earth) from sleeping and neglecting her work of productiveness. After the hulock, the hanuman and the common brown monkey were created, and then all other beasts.

In the water, the first animal created was the frog, for he was appointed to proclaim the advent of rain to all living things by his loud croak. After the frog, the many fishes of the deep were created.

Under the Earth there was much water, but on the surface there was none. Seeing this, the creator made rivers to flow and sent Noréchiré-Kimrébokré, or the rain, to water the Earth, and he sent a voice (thunder) before the rain to announce its coming.

Man had not yet been created, so Tatara called around him the lesser spirits, and declared his intention of placing man on earth. He chose a goddess named Susimé, and sent her down to prepare it for its new inhabitants.

The first abode of man was Amitong-Asiljong (somewhere in the east), and the first man and woman were Sani and Muni, whose children, Gancheng and Dujong, were the parents of Nōrō and Mandé,* who were the progenitors of the Garo race.

The first inhabitants of the Earth had no rice to eat, so they had to satisfy their hunger with roots and fruit which they found in the forest.

The first human beings to cultivate the soil were two dwarfs, Bōnéjasku and his wife Jané-Gandō. They cleared the forest as is done at the present day, and Tatara-Rabuga, to whom they made an offering of pumpkins, rewarded their industry by causing rice to grow.

The above is a translation of the Garo belief regarding the creation of the world as related to me by an Abeng priest. It represents the belief which exists among the rest of the divisions of the tribe, although details vary in many instances, and the names of the spirits are not always the same.

According to one version of the story, Nostu was not alone in her work, but was accompanied by a spirit named Sisté or Machi. Nostu spat upon the lilies and grass in the water, and Sisté blew, and thus the waters were separated and the dry land appeared. It was a waste, without life or light and unfit for man to live upon, for over the whole earth there hung an immense black pot. Bonépa (the legend calls him a *mité* or spirit, but says nothing about his arrival) took a pestle for pounding paddy, and with it lifted up the big, black pot so that the sun could shine in. Agpa-Pitrangpa (the sower, probably meant for Tatara-Rabuga) then took big rocks and threw them about in the soft ooze, thus solidifying the earth, separating the waters and enclosing valleys. It will be seen that this latter narrative is very inconsequent in its order of events, for it pre-supposes the existence of many things which in the first story are given their proper place in the order of creation.

When Tatara sent Nostu-Nōpantu to make the earth, he

* In another chapter Nōrō-Mandé has been referred to as one person; a certain amount of inconsistency must be excused in such legends.

also sent two other spirits, Brara and his wife Dōgni, to make the stars. But Brara was lazy, and instead of doing his allotted task, he wasted his time in flirting with his wife's maid. Brara's wife discovered this intrigue and determined, to punish them. She placed the seed of all kinds of skin diseases in a pot of water, which Brara and the maid proposed to take with them on a journey through the skies. The lovers were soon in sore distress. In a chastened mood they returned to Dōgni, and Brara, having promised to behave himself in future, they were forgiven and cured of their affliction, and Brara set to work and made the stars.

The rising and setting of the sun and moon are explained by the belief that the earth is a thin, flat body, and that Tatara has ordained that the sun shall shine on the upper and lower surfaces in turn, the moon shining above when the turn comes for the lower surface to enjoy the sun's warmth. Although it is believed that the sun and moon were made by command of the supreme deity, Tatara-Rabuga, another tale exists in which they are described as brother and sister, the children of Asima-Dingsima. The sun was called Rengra-Balsa, and the moon Biré-Jitjé. The moon was once the brighter and more beautiful of the two, and excited the envy and resentment of her brother. One day, their mother left the two together, and during her absence they began to quarrel. In his rage, the sun took some mud and flung it in his sister's face. Instead of washing herself, the moon waited until her mother's return and showed her what her brother had done. The mother not liking this talebearing, scolded her daughter for not having first washed her face, told her that as a punishment the mud should evermore stick to her face, and since then the moon has been less bright than the sun.

The stars collectively, are given the name Nōringrō-Nōjingjō, and it is believed that they represent spirits who have been placed in the heavens as rulers of the seasons and years. The Garos recognize fourteen stars and constellations by name, most of which are made to figure in the story which is told of the funeral ceremony of the mother of the moon, Norekbak-Norekding, elsewhere called Asima-Dingsima. As is the case with mortals, the mother of Susimé (the moon) was cremated when

she died, and each star is made to figure in some way in the funeral ceremony.*

(1) Mangripé (Cassiopeia, lit. the carrying of the body) represents the bearing of the body to the funeral pyre.

(2) Mirontek is the basket of rice from which the mourners were fed.

(3) Walsaldō (Sirius) is the star which set fire to the funeral pyre.

(4) Dō°sadil (the Pliades) represents the *dō°gasi* or cock sacrificed when the body was cremated, to lead the spirit of the dead to the better land.

(5) Chapchoré-Nonjé (Castor and Pollux) were two sisters who came to the funeral in very beautiful clothing. Susimé was so pleased at their appearance, that she ordained that they should for ever remain as witnesses of her mother's death and roam the heavens together.

(6) Ja°tokani (lit. the walking-stick) was the walking-stick of Susimé's mother. It wept bitterly at her death, so Susimé, in recognition of its affection, promised that it should always remain in the sky near her.

(7) Dō°sutat is the constellation which represents two cocks, which were tied to the feet of Susimé's mother during the preliminary lying in state. Susimé ordered them to fight as bulls are made to fight at funeral ceremonies at the present day. The name means "fighting cocks."

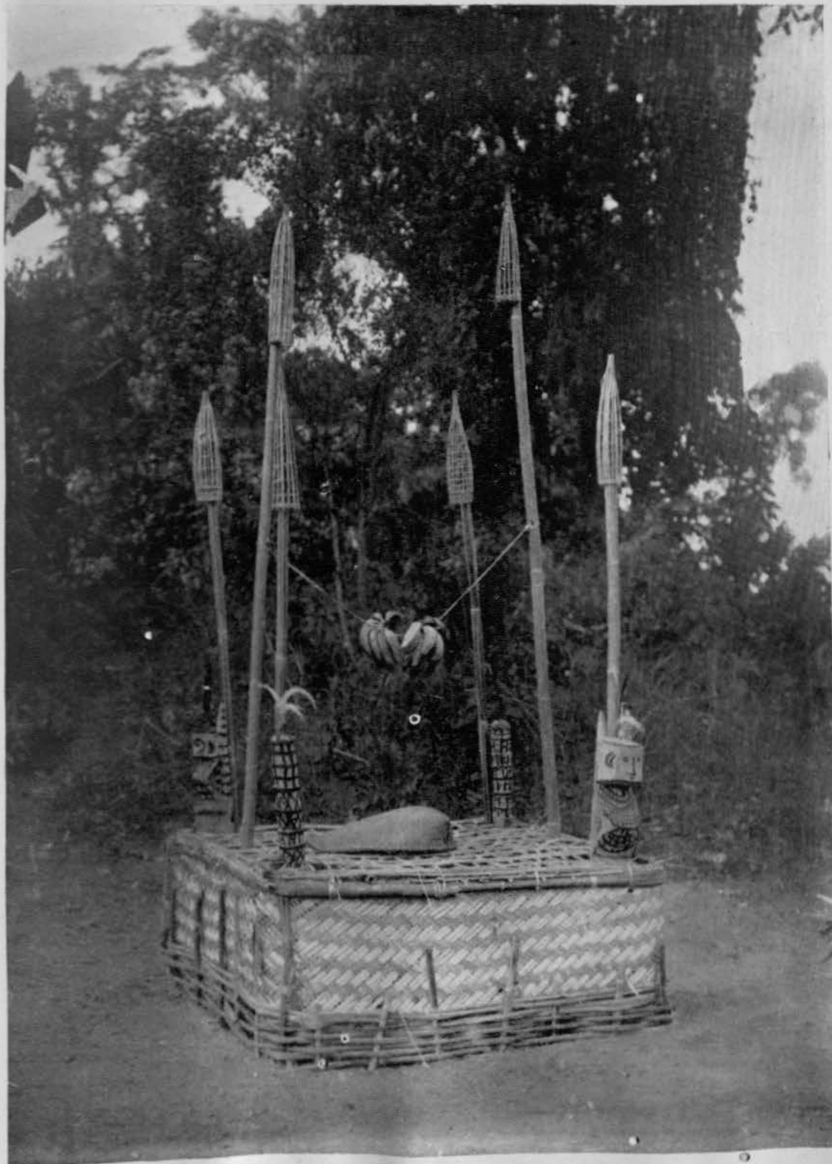
(8) Askidō°mé represents the cocks' feathers which were placed with other offerings at the head of the corpse during the lying in state.

(9) Mengō-ripé (lit. the carrying of the cat). Seeing their elders carrying a pig on a pole to the place of sacrifice, some children caught a cat and carried it in the same manner. Susimé was much pleased with them and ordered that a constellation should commemorate their act.

(10) Wak-ripé (Belt of Orion) represents the pig which was brought to the funeral as food for the mourners.

(11) Manganchi (Square of Pegasus) represents the four upright posts between which the wood for the cremation was

* In some cases I have not been able to identify the stars or constellations pointed out to me.



A DELANG, IN WHICH THE BONES OF THE DEAD ARE KEPT UNTIL THE POST-FUNERAL CEREMONY.

heaped up. The brightest of the four stars is said to represent the post to which the buffalo for sacrifice was tethered.

(12) Matma-Ja°kol (the Milky Way, lit. the foot-prints of the buffalo) owes its name to the following story. A buffalo was brought for sacrifice at the funeral ceremony. It was terrified at the blowing of horns and beating of drums, so the man who was leading it signalled to the musicians to stop. They, however, mistook his meaning, and the buffalo becoming unmanageable, broke away and galloped off. The band across the sky represents its track and the marks of its hoofs.

Besides the constellations and stars which I have named, they know Pringpang or the morning star (Venus), which warns the cocks that day is approaching and that it is time to wake sleeping mankind; and Atampang or the evening star (also Venus), which shows that it is time to shut up the fowls for the night.

Their explanation of a falling star is that once upon a time there was a star named Dō°sadil-Mingitir, which married a clod of earth. It married another star subsequently, but to this day has not forgotten the first love and occasionally comes down to earth to see her.

ANCESTOR WORSHIP.

A great reverence for ancestors and for the deceased in general, is clearly indicated in the Garo funeral observances, such as the placing of food for the spirits, the erection of shrines for the temporary sepulture of the bones, and the carving of memorial posts; but I cannot find that ancestor worship itself is practised. There is no deification of ancestors and no sacrifices are offered to them. The Garos fear the return of the dead in ghost form, but they look to their re-incarnation after a period of penance.

WORSHIP OF NATURAL FORCES.

The natural forces, thunder, lightning, rain, wind, earthquakes, and such phenomena as eclipses and shooting stars are not in themselves the subject of any worship or sacrifice, but a

spirit controls each, and sacrifices are offered to these spirits when rain or sunshine is required, or when the people are in fear on account of something in nature which they imagine portends a disaster to them.

According to Garo belief, lightning is caused by the spirit Gōéra, and is said to be the glittering and flashing of his sword. He formerly lived on earth, where he was the owner of a wonderful sword with which he slew a monster pig as big as a mountain. He afterwards ascended to the skies and now amuses himself from time to time in martial exercises with this sword. Thunder is the noise he makes when thus engaged. *Gōéra gō°a*, or "shot by Gōéra," is the Garo translation of "struck by lightning."

Earthquakes are attributed to the following cause. The earth is believed to be a flat square body, suspended from the sky by four ropes, one at each corner. On each of these ropes there lives a squirrel whose wish it is to bite the rope through. To prevent this, four blind men stand near the ropes, armed with long bamboos to frighten the squirrels. Occasionally one of the blind men becoming sleepy, neglects his duty; the squirrel on his rope commences to gnaw it, and by causing the rope to slacken, shakes the earth. Another version is that the earth, instead of being suspended by four ropes, is supported on four legs like a table, and a mouse running up and down one of these, causes the earth to move.

The evil spirit Nawang is credited with being the causer of eclipses. He is said to swallow the sun and moon. When the first shadow appears on the face of either, drums are beaten and horns blown to frighten the monster away.

Wind does not appear to be much feared, probably because very severe storms are not common in the Garo Hills. Sometimes, if a man is in fear that his house may be blown down, he takes a sword or *dao* in his hand and goes through the action of chopping the air, at the same time repeating the words "*a°gitokramchi, chikaréramchi ré°ang ré°ang*," which mean "go! go! to the mountain pass and to the deep ravine."

The rain god is invoked in cases of long-continued drought in the *Wachikrita* or *Salgurua* sacrifice. The ceremony is a curious one and worth describing. All the male members of

the village repair to a big rock in the neighbourhood, each person holding a gourd of water in his hand. The priest recites a prayer to implore the god to have mercy on them, sacrifices a goat and smears its blood upon the rock. The assembled persons then pour the contents of their gourds over the unfortunate priest to the accompaniment of beating of drums and blowing of wind instruments.

When, on the other hand, rain has been too constant and sunshine is desired, the *salaksō°a* or "burning of the sun" ceremony is performed. This ceremony is the reverse of that for rain, for whereas in the latter, water is poured out to bring rain, in the former, fires are lighted round about rocks to bring warmth and sunshine. In this, as in the rain ceremony, a goat or fowl is offered up. In every village a small piece of ground is set apart for the *salaksō°a* ceremony, and no man may cultivate or clear it under pain of a very heavy *dai* or fine.

WORSHIP OF DEITIES.

I have already shown that the main features of Garo religious observances are the sacrifice of animals and birds, and drinking, to which dancing is often added. A comparison of the ceremonies observed by the different divisions of the Garos has led me to the opinion that they may be roughly divided into those observed either by the Akawés or the Abengs, for in the great majority of cases they follow the fashion of either the one or the other of these divisions. With the Akawés I class the Chisaks, Machis, and Atongs, or the inhabitants of the eastern half of the hills, and with the Abengs all those divisions which occupy the western half. I shall therefore generally refer to Akawé and Abeng except when any division calls for particular notice.

Throughout the hills, certain sacrificial erections of bamboo are prepared, which vary in form according to the spirit to whom the offering is made, and which may, not inappropriately, be called altars.

The most commonly seen of these is the *sambasia*, which consists of an upright, oblong panel composed of a bamboo frame about four feet long and two feet broad, filled in with

reeds and the leaves of certain trees. Another is the *chorabudi*, named after the spirit who is invoked at its base. This consists of bamboos stuck into the ground so as to form an inverted cone about three feet high, filled with earth. A third kind, the *sekrek*, is merely a short bamboo stuck upright in the ground, the top section of which has been split into narrow strips, which, when splayed outwards and bound with cane, form a conical basket. Into this, offerings of food and sometimes money are placed. Another form of this is the *wadambeng sekrek*. This consists of two bamboos lashed together in the form of a cross. The top and horizontal extremities of this cross are opened out into the conical basket above described. The bamboos are further scraped so that masses of shavings hang down at intervals. When an offering is made at any of these sacrificial altars, the blood of the animal or bird is smeared over it, and some of the hairs or feathers are made to adhere to the bamboos thereby.

In the villages, there are always a number of long bamboos with leaves on, placed upright in the ground in front of and close to many of the houses. These are hung with cotton bols or bunches of paddy in ear, and serve as offerings either to the dead or to the spirits. In the first case they are called *mémang-midong*, and in the second *mité-midong*. Another form of this is the *wadong*, the difference being merely in the size of the bamboo.

On the roadside, one constantly meets with proof of the belief in the efficacy of propitiation by sacrifice. It may take the form of an image of straw lying in the roadway, pierced through with a bamboo stake, or a recumbent figure of mud or sand over which have been hung a few strings tied to upright bamboo sticks. The strings are perhaps ornamented with coloured rags, while on the image has been left the beak of a fowl or duck, and a little of the blood of the bird has been sprinkled on the surrounding earth. Instead of either of these, there may be a little fenced-in enclosure at the foot of a tree, within which an altar has been erected and smeared with blood. All these indicate a sacrifice for minor ailments, every one of which has its own particular spirit to whom an offering must be made. Serious illness calls for more elaborate sacrifice. It is

believed that every man and woman will twice in his or her life-time fall very ill and be in danger of dying. One such illness will occur in childhood, and the other at adult age. The first illness is called *bimarima*, and the second *kambêpéa*, but both must come to everybody; some persons die and some recover. It is never known what form these illnesses will take. They may come as cholera, smallpox, dysentery or any other disease, and it seems to depend upon the virulence of the attack, and not on the nature of the malady, whether it is to be classed as one or other of the predestined illnesses.

When it has been decided that an illness is either the *bimarima* or *kambêpéa*, pigs and even cattle may have to be offered in sacrifice for the recovery of the patient; and in the case of a man of wealth, the ceremony becomes one of some importance. When matters are at their worst, recourse is had to the *denjaringa* ceremony, which is performed in the following manner. Near the stream from which the invalid obtains his supply of water a place is cleared in the jungle, and on this open spot a *sambasia* is erected together with various bamboo receptacles for offerings of rice, cotton, etc. The officiating *kamal* or priest sacrifices a fowl, smears its blood as usual over the *sambasia*, and plasters the bamboos with the bird's feathers. He then ties one end of a cotton thread to the *sambasia*, leads it to the sick man's house and fastens the other end in the room in which he is lying. On the string a sprig of *kimbal* (*Callicarpa arborea*) leaves is hung. The idea is that if the sick man's spirit leaves his body it may be induced to return by the prayers of his friends, and will be able to find its way back by means of the thread as a guide. Outside the house the priest takes up his stand, and during the whole day calls upon Tatara-Rabuga to cure the sick person. A horn is blown continuously the while to frighten away the evil spirit which is afflicting the sick man. When night falls, if there has been no change in his condition, the priest addresses his prayers to the spirit Bidawé, who steals the souls of men, and continues his intercession as before. This having been kept up until a late hour, the cotton string is examined where the leaves were hung, and if it shows any sign of having sagged, it is believed that the sick man's spirit has come back, and that he will

recover. The string is then broken, and a piece of it tied round the neck of the invalid; drums and musical instruments strike up in his room, and his relations greatly rejoice. When I was told about this, I suggested that the last part of the performance was rather drastic treatment, and that it must often prove fatal to the patient; but I was told that, on the contrary, the moral effect of a belief that the gods had heard the prayers, cheered the patient and buoyed him up so greatly, that the pandemonium created by the musical instruments in so confined a space, did him no harm.

Besides the sacrifices for individual cases of illness, there are certain ceremonies which are observed once a year by a whole community or village, and are intended to safeguard its members from dangers of the forest, and from sickness and mishap during the coming twelve months. The principal of these is the Asongtata ceremony. Close to the outskirts of every big village a number of stones may be noticed stuck into the ground, apparently without order or method. These are known by the name of *asong*, and on them is offered the sacrifice which the Asongtata demands. The sacrifice of a goat takes place, and a month later, that of a *langur* (*Entellus* monkey), or a bamboo-rat is considered necessary. The animal chosen has a rope fastened round its neck and is led by two men, one on each side of it, to every house in the village. It is taken inside each house in turn, the assembled villagers, meanwhile, beating the walls from the outside, to frighten and drive out any evil spirits which may have taken up their residence within. The round of the village having been made in this manner, the monkey or rat is led to the outskirts of the village, killed by a blow of a *dao*, which disembowels it, and then crucified on bamboos set up in the ground. Round the crucified animal long, sharp bamboo stakes are placed, which form *chevaux de frise* round about it. These commemorate the days when such defences surrounded the villages on all sides to keep off human enemies, and they are now a symbol to ward off sickness and dangers to life from the wild animals of the forest. The *langur* required for the purpose is hunted down some days before, but should it be found impossible to catch one, a brown monkey may take its place; a hulock may not be used.

As the Garos are entirely dependent on agriculture for their support, it is but natural that they should regard with some anxiety either too prolonged a drought or too continuous or unseasonable rain. The spirits which rule the seasons and upon whose offices the growth of the crops depends, are, therefore, the most important in the Garo mythology, and at all stages of cultivation and harvesting some kind of sacrifice must be offered up to them.

Religious observances in this connection may be said to commence when a man first decides on the piece of ground which he wishes to clear and cultivate. Before beginning, he consults the omens in the following manner. In one corner of the plot of ground he makes a little clearance called *ōpata*, and then goes home. The next night, should he dream a bad or unlucky dream, he abandons the land which he proposed to open out, and seeks another piece where the omens are more propitious. Having cut his jungle and let it dry, he sets fire to it, and on the following day the first sacrifice to the god of the field takes place. It is called *Agalmaka*, and consists in the sacrifice of a fowl.

The next stage in cultivation is the sowing of the seed. To ensure the favour of the spirits, this must be preceded by the *Gĭtchipong* and the *Michĭltata* ceremonies. The first is a personal sacrifice which each individual must offer, and the second a collective ceremony in which the whole village joins. The spirit invoked is Rokimé, the "mother of rice." In this ceremony, the priest strikes the earth with the handle of a *dao* or chopper and reminds the spirit that certain flowers in the jungle have blossomed, which is a sign that it is time to sow the rice of which she is the mother. He implores her favour and protection that the crop may be a good one. In this connection the Garos believe that the spirit who first taught them to cultivate as they now do, was named Misi-agrang-Saljong-sang-gitang. He returns to the country every year, scatters the seeds which later spring up as weeds, and tells the people not to forget the lessons which he taught them about keeping their fields clean. He then sends the rain, which makes the rice grow as well as the weeds, and on their own exertions in keeping down the latter, depends the harvest that

they will reap. A small crab, the *ang·ké gĭmĭnchi*, is said to have been entrusted by the spirits with the duty of watering the crops in time of drought.

Before any of the crops may be harvested, it is necessary to offer the firstfruits to the gods in the *Rongchugala*, or, as it is also called, *Gindégala* sacrifice. Some ears of rice or millet are plucked, pounded between two stones, and offered up on a piece of plantain stem. A similar sacrifice is *de rigueur* before a Garo is permitted to partake of melons or Indian corn.

When the rice harvest has been fully gathered in, the great sacrifice and festival of the year, the *Wangala* or *Gurëwata* takes place. This is the most festive observance of the year, and combines religious sacrifice with much conviviality. It is celebrated by all sections of the tribe except the Duals and some Plains Garos. The cost of the entertainment falls principally on the *nokma* of the village, who provides a pig to be eaten by his guests, and plenty of liquor. Among the Akawés and Chisaks of the north and north-eastern hills a curious feature of the ceremony is the manufacture of *guré* or "horses" out of pieces of plantain-stem for the body, and of bamboo for the head and legs. The image of the "horse" is laid on the floor of the *nokma's* house, and the assembled guests dance and sing around it the whole night long, with the usual intervals for refreshments. Early the next morning, the "horse" is taken to the nearest river and launched on the water to find its way down stream on the current. For those who possess the necessary paraphernalia, the *guré* takes the shape of a horse's head of large size, made of straw, and covered with cloth. I once saw one in the village of Rongrong, which, when in use, was ornamented with discs of brass on both sides of the face. Its eyes and ears were of the same metal, and between the ears were fixed a pair of wild goat's horns. To the head were attached a number of bronze bells similar to those hawked about by Bhutia pedlars. The owner, a *laskar*, was unable to tell me whence they came, but said that they were inherited from his wife's mother, and were many generations old.

The manner in which this form of *guré* is used is the following. The head is mounted on a stick, which a man holds

before him in such a way that the head comes up to the level of his chest. Two straps pass over his shoulders to relieve his hands of the weight. The body of the "horse" is then built round his own body with cane and cloth. For a tail, yak's tails are fastened in with his own hair, which, for the occasion, is allowed to hang down instead of being tied up. The performer thus apparelled, commences to dance a shuffling step to the usual music. In front of him dances the priest, who goes through the pantomime of beckoning to the animal to come to him. The remaining guests of the *nokma* form a *queue* behind the "horse," and dance after it. When the first man gets tired, another takes his place, and the dancing goes on right through the night. A pleasant part of the performance is the pelting of the *guré* with eggs. A piece of egg-shell was still sticking to the horn of the *guré* which was shown to me.

Strictly speaking, this festival should last for three days and two nights. When it is over, the *guré* is taken to a stream and the body thrown into the water, the head being preserved for another year. The people who come to see it off, bring rice with them, and a meal by the water's edge closes the proceedings.

At the *Wangala*, it is the custom to mix flour with water, and for the assembled people to dip their hands into the mixture and make white hand-marks on the posts and walls of the house and on the backs of the guests. This custom is known as *wanti toka* by the Abengs, and *ramchandol toka* by the people of the plains. The last name savours of Hinduism, for the first syllable can be nothing but the Hindu deity Ram, and *chandol* seems to be a corruption of the *sindur* used by Hindus for making red caste marks. A further connection with a Hindu origin may be traced in the fact that the Plains Garos use the red juice of a berry instead of rice flour.

The last ceremony in connection with crops is known as *Ja°kara* by the plains' people, and *Rusrōta* by those of the hills. It is intended to celebrate the safe housing of the crops in the granaries.

All the ceremonies and sacrifices I have described take the form of thank-offerings or prayers to beneficent deities. There are also malevolent spirits who must be propitiated. Those who

do the greatest damage to crops are Bang, Rakasi and Miskal. The first-named appears to share with Nawang, to whom reference has already been made, the first place among evil-intentioned and harmful demons. The favourite method of keeping the spirit Bang at a distance is to make a cylindrical cage about four feet long and two in diameter. This is filled with all manner of old, worn-out household utensils, such as cooking-pots, gourds and bamboo spoons, and is slung on a pole supported by two uprights. This is placed by the side of the path leading to the village, and a fowl is then sacrificed. A pestle for pounding paddy is also thought to be very efficacious in keeping the spirit away, if stuck upright in the ground by the side of the path. Another malignant spirit which takes a delight in blighting the crops is Chual. This spirit is said to take the form of a flash of light across the sky, but to be different from lightning. The light they refer to is probably nothing more than a meteor of more than usual brilliancy.

SACRIFICIAL STONES.

In describing the Asongtata ceremony I referred to the sacrificial stones which are to be seen at the entrance of every big village. They are rough, unhewn stones, set up in the ground without any attempt at regularity, and seldom more than three feet high. The number of these stones varies greatly; I have seen as few as four or five, and as many as fifty in one place. They are looked upon with considerable reverence and may never be taken up. When a village is moved to a new site, the stones remain, and the villagers must return to the old site for the annual ceremony.

When the time for the Asongtata sacrifice arrives, the stones are decked with *kadisĭls* or crowns made of bamboo, and some of the sacrificial emblems which I have described are erected close to them. For some reason that I have not been able to ascertain, a number of swords are also brought and placed, point upwards, into the hollow ends of a row of short bamboos. The priest slaughters the animal to be sacrificed and smears its blood over the stones. In some cases, each stone appears to represent a particular guardian spirit, for in one village I

was shown a stone named Chokki, and another, his brother Dalmang, while round about them were many other smaller stones, said to represent their wives and families. In other villages the stones have no names to distinguish them, but are known only by the collective name of *asong* or *kōsi*.

Though the priest officiates at the sacrifice, it is the privilege of the *nokma* to provide for, or sanction it, and any attempt to usurp his rights quickly leads to litigation and a demand for compensation.

Besides the *asong*, which are always close to a village, one comes across similar stones in isolated places. These are also called *kōsi*, and mark the spot where a man has been killed, in war, or for the sake of revenge. Near every *kōsi* there has been planted either a *mandal* tree (*Erythrina suberosa*) or an Euphorbia cactus. Needless to say, these latter stones are all very old. They are not the objects of worship or sacrifice.

DIVINATION.

When a Garo priest is called upon to decide what evil spirit is troubling a sick man, he has recourse to one of two forms of divination, named *pongsi-nina* and *risal-nina* respectively. In the first-named method, a thin slip of bamboo about a foot long is tied into a bow with a piece of cotton thread. At one end of the bow a short length of string is allowed to hang down. This loose end is rubbed on the body of the sick person who seeks information. The priest then lifts up the bow by the tight string, holding it lightly between the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, while with the left hand he supports the right wrist. He then commences to call upon the gods by name, one after the other, and it is declared that the bow will begin to oscillate when he reaches the name of the spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered. In the second method of divining, a cup of water and some grains of uncooked rice are required. Holding the cup of water in his left hand, the priest drops the rice into it, grain by grain, calling out the name of a spirit as each grain falls. The spirit named at the moment in which two floating grains come in contact with each other, is the one who must be propitiated.

PRIESTHOOD.

The office of priest is not hereditary, nor is it confined to any particular class, for anybody may assume the duties who can commit to memory the necessary string of obscure sentences and incantations, or who is better endowed than his neighbours with the power of divination.

The *kamal's* life has certain drawbacks, for his duties are often both onerous and unpleasant; for instance, when he has to watch by the side of the dead for long hours together, reciting tedious funeral dirges. Very little remuneration is given him, and in no way does the priest enjoy privileges which his fellow-villagers do not share. He must work in the fields and grow his crops like the rest, and the only way in which his lot is different from that of his neighbours, is that he must devote his attention to the requirements of others, even at personal inconvenience. In such circumstances it would be imagined that the post was a difficult one to fill, yet every village has its *kamal* and he never seems to shirk his duties.

CEREMONIES AND CUSTOMS ATTENDING BIRTH AND NAMING OF CHILDREN.

I now pass to the religious ceremonies and some customs which relate to the life of man, and naturally begin with his birth, with regard to which the Garos have some interesting usages.

When a woman is about to be confined, her husband vows to offer up a sacrifice of a bull, a goat, or a fowl, according to his means, if the child is safely born. The vow is fulfilled immediately after the birth, or, if the labour is of long duration, some time after its commencement. The animal or bird is killed outside the house by the *kamal*, who recites a long incantation to avert the influence of evil spirits. The women who are attending the expectant mother have a like duty to perform. Rice is scattered on the floor of the house round their patient, and a chant kept up, of which the following is a translation: "Go away! go away! evil spirit; in the way of the *n°ama*, of the *na°sa*, of the *banggni*, and of the *giljaré* do not

stand watching; do not prevent it; do not wait for it; do not watch; do not lick; do not swallow; do not smack your lips; do not let your mouth water." The names above mentioned are those of fish, and they are intended as symbols for the child which is about to enter the world. The spirits are addressed as *skal*, a word which usually means witch or sorcerer. Should the birth be long deferred, a goat is brought into the house, and its body placed in contact with that of the woman. At the same time the *kamal* takes a little water in his mouth, blows it in a fine spray over the woman, and utters the word "*poisrang*," which seems to be nearly equivalent to "good luck."

The above is the custom among the Akawés. Among the Abengs, the goat is brought into the house, some hairs are plucked from its body and burned close to the woman. The goat is then lifted up and promised in sacrifice to the spirit who is afflicting the woman, if he ceases to trouble her.

The after-birth is either buried or placed in a gourd and hung up upon a tree.

As soon as the navel string on the child has fallen off, the mother and infant are taken down to a stream and bathed. Before starting for the bath, a long bamboo is forced through the roof of the house into the main room, close to the wall of the sleeping apartment, and through the floor to the ground beneath. At the foot of this bamboo, in the house, a *sambasia* or sacrificial altar, is erected. On the return from the bath, the baby's head is shaved, a little patch only being left untouched on the top. The priest then offers a prayer at the altar for the happiness of the child, after which the child's father climbs up on to the roof of the house, taking with him the *sambasia* and a fowl. He cuts off the bird's head, and allows its blood to drip down the above-mentioned bamboo, on to the floor beneath. The bamboo is then cut through by the priest, and the father, having hauled it up, throws it and the *sambasia* away. He also throws to the ground the body of the fowl, and where it falls, there must it be cooked and eaten. The father of the child and the priest alone are allowed to partake of it; any friends who may have assembled being treated to liquor only. The beak and crop of the fowl are placed on a piece of plantain

leaf and offered to the gods. The shaving of the baby's head is known as *kni minsu gala*, and the ceremony which follows is called *Tongrengma denpaka* by the Abengs, and *Jankipongtata* by the Akawés and Machis.

I have occasionally seen small figures, made of bamboo or grass, on the roof of a house, above the entrance. These are placed as an offering to the spirit Tongrengma when the child of the owners of the house cries a great deal. A fowl is sacrificed, and the ceremony appears to be an invocation to this spirit to drive away the evil spirits who are troubling the child.

On the day on which a child is born, nobody in the village will go near the fields, for it is believed that to visit them would result in the crops being blighted.

At the time of birth, the omens are often consulted to ascertain whether the infant will be prosperous and happy. A fowl is killed, and its intestines are pulled out. They are divided into two parts, and these the *kamal* or priest holds up before him. That part which is to the right belongs to the child, and that to the left to the spirits. Should the right-hand portion be full of digested food, and a little longer than the other, the omen is good and the child will grow up into a prosperous man or woman.

The majority of the Garos do not observe any ceremony in connection with the naming of children, but among the Abengs one exists, which is not, however, always adhered to. Among them it is permissible to name a child directly after birth, but it is more usually done three weeks or a month later. A sacrifice is offered to Tongrengma, the guardian spirit of all children, and the child's name is uttered by some woman other than the mother, for she may not pronounce it on this occasion. A sacrifice is also sometimes offered to the spirits of the sun and the earth: to the former because it is the watcher over the child, and to the latter because it is the source of all evil and can avert them. The child is nearly always named after an ancestor who has been dead for some years. The name of a living relative, or of one who has recently died, is never given. The reason is that it is unlucky to mention by name those who have lately died, and either of the above contingencies would render the child liable to bear a dead person's name.

It sometimes happens that a child bears a marked resemblance to a deceased relation, and in such a case it is believed that the spirit of the deceased has returned to earth and has entered into the child's body.

CEREMONIES ATTENDING MARRIAGE.

There is very little of a religious nature in Garo marriages. No sacrifices are offered up, nor are any of the usual emblems of religion erected as in ceremonies connected with births and death. The nearest approach to anything of a religious nature is the consulting of omens by the village priest, to ascertain whether the wedded couple will be happy and prosperous or the reverse.

Among the Akawés, this ceremony, which is known as *dō°sia*, is performed in the following manner. In the presence of the contracting parties and their friends, the priest takes two fowls, a cock and a hen, holds them so that their heads are close together, and strikes them with a piece of wood. He then drops them to the ground. The fowls struggle a little before dying, and their relative positions after death determine whether the omen is good or bad. If the heads of the birds lie with the beaks pointing towards each other, the omen is good, but if they lie with the beaks apart, it is bad, and it is thought that the marriage will be an unhappy one.

Among the Abengs, the manner of performing this ceremony is somewhat different. The *kamal* takes the hen, and, holding it by the legs or the wings, strikes the woman on the back with the bird, and at the same time repeats an incantation, which, translated, runs as follows: "Certain ones have this day consulted the omen of the fowls. If they are to be bound to each other like the melon clings to its support, or the *setiri*, or the *badagong* (kinds of climbing cane), or the *ré* (another kind of cane), then the hen will look to the man and the cock to the woman." The man is treated in the same manner, he however, being struck on the back with the cock. The priest then holds the two birds together, and with one effort pulls off both heads and throws them on the ground. For the omen to be good the

beak of the cock should, as it lies on the ground, point towards the woman, and that of the hen towards the man.

The *dō°-sia* is followed by the *dō°bĭk-nia*, which is another form of consulting the omens. An incision is made in the stomach of one of the birds, and the *kamal*, introducing his fingers, draws out the larger intestines and holds them out before him. If they hang together, the omen is a good one, but if they are apart, desertion or death is predicted. If the intestines are full of digested food, the couple will be rich, and if empty, they will be poor.

There is another form of this same ceremony, which is performed by a *nokma* in honour of his future son-in-law, in order to ascertain whether he will be a lucky and successful man. A goat or bull is killed, and the gall-bladder of the animal sought. It is washed, and held up for inspection by the priest. Should the bladder be full of liquid, it is believed that the young man will become rich and prosperous. After this ceremony has been performed in his honour, should the *nokrom*, as he is called, refuse to marry the man's daughter and withdraw from the contract, he becomes liable for the value of the animal.

After the marriage, and when the omens have been consulted, there follow the usual feasting, dancing and drinking.

BELIEFS CONCERNING DEATH.

The Garo beliefs on the subject of death and the life hereafter, are the most interesting of their many superstitions, and their funeral ceremonies are both varied and elaborate.

It is believed that in the human body there lives a spirit, which, on being released from its mortal covering, wends its way to Mangru-Mangram, the abode of spirits. Several spots are indicated as the place of their residence. The spirits are said to have first taken up their abode at Napak, a place in the north-eastern hills between Damra and Cheran. Later, when their numbers increased, they went to two hills, named Balsiri and Balpakram, and they now wend their way to Chikmang, an isolated peak in the south-east of the Garo Hills, not far from the Someswari river. Mangru-Mangram is a kind of purgatory through which all must pass, the good and the bad alike. As

the mortal worked on earth, so the spirit must work at Chikmang. On arrival there he inquires the whereabouts of the relations who have gone before him, builds his house where they built, or lives with them if they have not yet returned to earthly life. Spirit-land is not in any sense a place of joy, and a speedy release, with a happy reincarnation, is hoped for.

The journey to Mangru-Mangram is a long one, and the spirit is provided with a guide, the necessary eatables for the journey, and money for his requirements, exactly as if he were about to set out on a long journey on earth. These requirements are provided by the sacrifice of the necessary animals, and the offering of food and liquor at the shrines which form the last resting-place of the deceased.

On their journey, the spirits rest at a pool of water called Mémang-Misal Cha°ram or Chidĭmak-Chikong (*i.e.* "the place for the ghost to eat the midday meal," or the "ink-water pool"). Here they can refresh themselves and eat the food which has been sent them, after carefully tethering to a *boldak* tree the bull which every spirit leads away with it. In olden days, when human sacrifices were possible, every endeavour was made that a rich man should have a servant in the far land, and the immolation of slaves and captives was of frequent occurrence; nowadays, a fowl takes the place of a human victim.

Some Garos believe that the common night-jar, called by them *dō°uang*, is the guide of the departed soul. Others declare that it is the messenger which gives news to the relatives of the deceased that it has seen his spirit on the way to Chikmang. It is a most inauspicious thing for a night-jar to perch on the roof of a house, and when this happens, the death of one of its inmates is thought to be imminent. If one of them is lying ill in the house at the time, it is believed that the bird has come to give the message that it is time for the soul of the sick man to start on its long journey.

On its way to Chikmang, the spirit is by no means free from danger, for at one place there is the monster Nawang, lying in wait. He accosts each spirit and demands what it has done on earth, and what property it has brought with it. The demon is covetous of brass earrings, and the spirit which is well supplied with these, throws them on the ground and escapes while the

monster is engaged in picking them up. This is, in theory, the reason why men and women wear bunches of rings in their ears, though in practice, they are looked upon merely as ornaments, the myth being known to very few. In some cases, the spirit replies to the question, "I have married a thousand wives," hearing which the demon gives a loud guffaw and runs away. The inference is, of course, that Nawang could not be seen in the company of one so depraved, and lets the spirit go. Having arrived at Mangru-Mangram, the spirits reside there for a period of time until the appointed hour arrives for re-incarnation. At the birth of every child a spirit is said to leave purgatory.

The Garos regard with great dread anybody who remains for a long time in a comatose state before death, for they believe that Nawang has taken possession of the sick person and is devouring him. So great is their fear on these occasions, that I think it must sometimes happen that a person in such a state is taken to the funeral pyre and burned before he is quite dead. I know of one case in which a man who had been unconscious for a long time was on the point of being cremated while yet alive, and was only saved by the providential interference of a missionary. The man did not die until several days later.

It is thought that in some cases the spirit has the power of leaving the body before death and of entering into another body. Certain ailments are attributed to the fact that the sufferer's spirit cannot make up its mind where to stay, and is therefore restless and uneasy. When this is the case, the person whose soul is afflicted becomes thin and emaciated, and if he dies, it is believed that his spirit has entered into the body of a child which is yet unborn. Should the afflicted person recover, some woman will bear a dead child.

Being startled, is thought to be the result of the spirit having left the body through sudden fear. It usually returns at once, but if any ill effects are felt from the shock, a sacrifice becomes necessary to calm the troubled spirit.

The length of the term of probation at Chikmang and the manner of the return to earth, appear to depend either on the cause of the person's death, or upon the sins he committed during life-time. For instance, it is believed

that the spirit of the person who commits suicide by hanging will be reincarnated in the form of a beetle, which is condemned to eat nothing but the sap or gum of the plant which provided the fibre from which the rope was made. After death caused by an elephant or a tiger, the spirit goes to Chikmang, but is reincarnated in the form of the animal which caused the death. In neither of the above cases will the spirit again inhabit a human body. The spirit of a murderer is condemned to reside at Chikmang for seven generations before returning to human form. Except in the cases I have cited above, if a man does wrong in this life, he may, as a punishment, be born again in the form of an animal, but this does not preclude the possibility of the spirit returning to human shape after the death of the animal and a second sojourn at Chikmang. It appears from this that the spirits of animals, like the souls of men, are supposed to go to Chikmang, and some of the funeral rites prove that this is the Garo belief.

DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD.

The Garos almost invariably burn their dead, and the cremation nearly always takes place at night. There is however, an exception to each of these rules. A leper is never burned, but is buried instead. In former days, a leper was isolated from his people, and when in the last stages of the disease made very drunk. His house was then set on fire, and he and all that he possessed were destroyed. When dealing with certain other wasting diseases, an even more barbarous method was adopted. The sick man was taken far away into the jungle, and left there with a basket of food and the means of cooking it. When this food was exhausted, the wretched man simply died of starvation.

The exception to the second rule occurs when a person has been killed by a tiger. The corpse is cremated, but it must be disposed of in the daytime and where it was found; it may not be taken to the village. Not only is the dead man denied the usual funeral rites, but everything that he had in daily use, such as his clothes, cooking-pots, sword and spear must be

destroyed, for it is *marang* or taboo to make use of them after such a disaster. After such a death, if any of the near relatives of the deceased fall ill, it is thought that the spirit of the unfortunate man has returned to visit them, and when they die, they also must be burned before sundown. The above remarks do not apply to a death caused by any other animals except a tiger.

When a man or woman dies, the body is washed, with *chu-bĭtchi* or undiluted liquor if the deceased was a *nokma* or a rich man, or with water if he was poor. The body is then laid out in the main room of the house. A rich man is placed upon rows of his *rangs* or gongs, if he possessed them; a poor man lies upon the bamboo floor. A rupee is placed in each hand for the expenses of the journey which the spirit of the deceased is taking to Mangru-Mangram. Among the Akawés, the corpse lies on its back, the hands tied tightly together behind it, and the big toes bound together. Among the Abengs, the body is allowed to lie with the arms to the side, and the toes are free. The following duties are then performed exactly in the order named. A pillow of loose, unginned cotton is placed under the head of the corpse. A young chicken (a cock when the deceased is a woman, and a hen in the case of a man) is tethered to the big toe of either the right or left foot, with a sufficient length of string to allow it to walk about on the floor. This is named *dō°jasi*, and takes the place of the slave, who in former days was sacrificed at the funeral ceremony of his master. After the cremation, this chicken is killed and its blood smeared over the *delang* which will presently be described. A *kō°ma* or *gachek* (a small basket) filled with uncooked rice, is then placed close to the dead person's head. On the rice an egg is placed, and round the egg, cock's tail feathers are planted in the rice. A small basket of uncooked rice is then laid near the foot of the corpse for the chicken to eat. A pot of liquor is placed behind the head of the corpse, and lastly, the floor near the head is covered with pieces of plantain leaf, upon which have been heaped cooked rice and various kinds of animal food.

The above disposal of the food is the custom among the Abengs. The Akawés place the cooked food and the basket

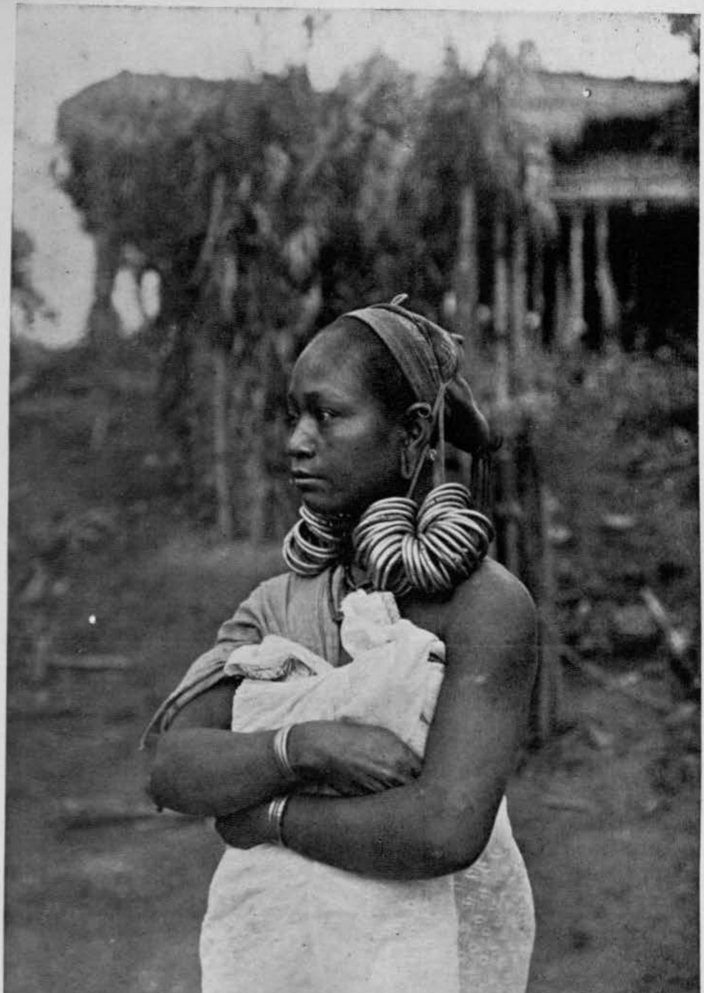


ILLUSTRATION OF HOW THE RINGS ARE WORN, SUPPORTED BY TWO STRINGS, WHEN THEIR WEIGHT BECOMES TOO GREAT FOR THE EARS.

with the rice and egg beyond the feet of the dead person, and beyond the basket of rice from which the chicken is to eat.

The valuable property of the deceased's household, such as ornaments and clothes, is then hung round about him as he lies in state.

The corpse having been thus laid out, is allowed to remain for two days and a night, and is burned on the second night. During this period, watch is constantly kept by women, with whom is generally the *kamal* or priest. These keep up an almost unceasing dirge, which consists of a recital of the good deeds and qualities of the deceased, and of a prayer that his spirit may be guided safely to its appointed place. While this dirge is being sung, one of the singers beats in slow time on the floor with a piece of wood or the shuttle of a Garo loom, or uses a pair of small cymbals, and thus leads the watchers in their weird and solemn chant. The wailing of the women at such a wake also contains an invocation to Mégam-Airipa, the first man who died. They warn the spirit of the dead person to beware of Nawang and of other dangers on the road to Chikmang, and implore him to note carefully the road he is travelling by, so that he may remember it and be able to return to his mother's house when released from spirit-land.

A curious custom exists among these people in connection with the lying in state of a man of importance. In order that the watchers of the dead shall not go to sleep, the young men of the village dress up as wild beasts and come into the house of mourning to frighten the women with their howls and antics. Certain animals are recognized as necessary to this performance. There must be a tiger, a bear, a monkey, a sambur, a barking deer, and an insect known as *mankram*. These are represented in a very crude fashion, for the actors merely smear their faces with ashes or some other white substance, or wear masks made out of pieces of plantain stem. The *mankram* is something like a scorpion, with a tail upturned over its back, so the unfortunate youth who represents it, is obliged to crawl into the house on his stomach, with one leg bent up. With these animals there should be an *ajema*, or ogre, and a ghost. This pantomime is considered an important part of some funeral ceremonies.

On the day of the cremation, but before the corpse is

removed, a preparatory ceremony is performed. Among the Akawés it consists of the following. The relations of the dead go in procession from the house in which he died to that of his mother. When the distance is not too great, they lead a cotton string from one house to the other. The Abengs perform this ceremony in a different manner. The relatives having placed the body on the funeral pyre, and just before or after lighting the fire, march in procession round it, the nearest relation holding a bunch of cock's feathers in his hand. They then move off to the house of the deceased's mother and place the feathers on the *kima* or memorial post, or lay them by in the house until the *kima* has been carved. The meaning of this ceremony is that the departed spirit will one day return to earth, and if nothing be done to mark its home it may lose its way. The Akawés fasten the thread in order to guide the spirit, and the Abengs put up the cock's feathers in order that it may recognize its own home. When the distance is great, the cotton thread has to be dispensed with, but the fords of all rivers crossed by the procession are marked by a piece of thread stretched across the water.

This ceremony is known as *ja°ragata*, or the bringing home of the spirit. I witnessed it once when the sister of a *laskar* died in a village not far from Garobadha. The woman's own home was near Damalgiri, about eleven miles from where she died. The *ja°ragata* party marched to the spot where she had died and been burned, and back to her mother's house. First went a man carrying on his back a large pot of liquor, an essential on such an occasion. Behind him came six or seven boys beating gongs, a man blowing a *singa* or buffalo-horn trumpet, and, last of all, another man beating a *kram*, or drum of the pattern used on solemn occasions.

As soon as the proper time has arrived for cremating the body, it is taken out and placed upon the funeral pyre or altar called *ganchi*. This is built in the *atelc* or public square of the village, in front of, and close to the house of mourning. It consists of four upright posts, so arranged as to enclose a rectangle, within which logs of wood are piled. These posts are sometimes roughly carved, as also is the pole used to stir the fire. A curious ornamentation of the *ganchi* is the *mangpĭl*,

a T-shaped board about two feet long and one foot broad, on which rough pictures of human beings and animals are painted with a mixture of blood and soot. One such ornament is hung on each of the four sides of the *ganchi*, and they remain there until the pile of wood is set on fire. They are then taken down and kept to hang round the *delang* or shrine, which will be described later. There is no particular meaning in this board, and I believe it to be put on for the sake of ornamentation only.

If at a cremation the body does not burn well, it is thought that the demon Nawang has got hold of the spirit of the deceased, and some brass earrings are thrown on the fire as an offering to induce him to release it.

The favourite wood for burning a body is that of the *mandal* tree (*Erythrina suberosa*). It is thought that if the corpse is burned with a bad or common wood the spirit in its re-incarnation will have bad health. Some woods are objected to for special reasons. For instance, the *simul* or tree-cotton is believed to bring bad luck to the spirit; the *boldak* (*Schima walichii*) causes itching and interferes with the spirit's rest; the *ágachi* (*Dilennia pentagyna*) causes sorrow and tears, for it is full of water or sap. A hard wood is preferred, for it is thought that the flame of such is a greater help to the spirit than that of softer fuel. The rule is, however, more honoured in the breach than the observance, and in reality all woods are used without distinction.

Near the place of cremation a bull is kept tethered to a Y-shaped post named *gĭlmirong*, and when the last of the body is about to be consumed by the fire, the animal is slaughtered, so that its spirit may accompany that of the dead person and be of service to it in the next world. Sometimes, the relatives of the deceased bring several animals which are made to fight before being sacrificed. It is thought that the prowess of the victorious bull reflects much honour on the owner.

In some parts, a dog is supposed to guide the spirit to Chikmang. The animal is killed, placed under the *ganchi*, and burned with the corpse.

I have referred to the human sacrifice which was customary in olden times. Another and more merciful form of celebrating

this part of the funeral rites was to keep a living slave tied to the leg of the corpse from the day of the decease to the hour of cremation. He or she was then released from further servitude. When a human sacrifice was considered necessary, but a victim could not be found, the bamboo tray with which the flames were fanned was suspended from a long pole close to the place of cremation. This remained hanging until that part of the funeral rites had been performed.

On the morning after the cremation, the widow, widower or a near relation of the deceased, goes to the place of cremation with a cooking-pot, some rice, fresh-water prawns, and an egg. These are cooked, if possible, on the embers of the funeral fire, and when the food is ready, the mourner breaks the vessel containing it and raises a loud lament. This food also is intended for the use of the spirit on its journey, and is called *mi mémang*, or ghost rice. The rice represents the usual food of living persons; the prawns are cooked because when the ghost of Mégam-Airipa, the first man who died, returned to his home, he found his wife catching prawns; and the egg represents the *wakmil* or fat pig eaten at the funeral feast.

When the cremation has been completed, the bones that remain among the ashes are carefully collected. The ashes are placed in a basket which is taken into the jungle and there deposited. It is not emptied, but merely placed on the ground and left. The bones are disposed of in a number of ways. The Akawés place them in a pot which they wrap up in a cloth and place on a *sekrek*, a cone-shaped support made of bamboo. This is then lashed to the *maljuri* post of the deceased's house. A small cloth canopy called *alang* is spread over the bones, and a notched stick fixed so as to represent steps from the floor to the pot. The steps are intended to enable the spirit of the dead to return to the bones should it wish to do so. A daily offering of rice is made to the bones until the post-funeral ceremony has been performed.

Among the Abengs and Chisaks, the bones are collected in a similar manner and placed in a pot which, however, is buried in the earth outside the deceased's house. Over the pot a little shrine is built called *delang*, and to this offerings of food are made. The *delang* is a covered-in enclosure made of bamboo,

sometimes filled with earth, and often surmounted by a canopy of white cloth.

It sometimes happens that a man dies far away from his village and cannot be cremated at his home. In such circumstances it is customary for the Akawés to buy a number of cowries and put them into a pot to represent the bones of the dead man. Among the Abengs, the usual *delang* is built, but nothing is put into it to take the place of the bones.

About two months after the cremation ceremony, or as soon as the relatives of the deceased can afford it, the second ceremony takes place.

Among the Akawés, the pot is brought out of the house and taken to a place where preparations have been made for feasting and dancing. Here, the bones are taken out of the pot and distributed among some of the female relatives of the deceased, who bind the bones to their persons and dance with them during the entire celebration. Finally, the bones are taken into the jungle and buried, preferably on the bank of a stream.

Among the Abengs, there is the same dancing and feasting, after which the *delang* is set on fire and destroyed, but the bones are not disturbed.

The Atongs, like the Abengs, bury the bones of the dead and erect a *delang* over them, but for the second ceremony they dig up the bones and dance with them like the Akawés.

The Rugas and the Chiboks vary somewhat from the other divisions of the tribe in the manner of conducting their death ceremonies. Like all other Garos they burn their dead. The Rugas then bury the bones like the Abengs, but instead of erecting a *delang* over them, they cover them over with a winnowing-tray made of bamboo. By the side of this a long bamboo is stuck into the ground, to which a strip of white cloth is attached, which floats in the air like a pennant. Offerings of food are made to this exactly as is done by the other divisions of the tribe. When the time arrives for the post-funeral ceremony, the women put on peculiar silver ear ornaments called *penta*, and a solemn dance is inagurated in memory of the dead. The bones are not disturbed, and when the ceremony is over the bamboo and the tray are set on fire and destroyed.

The Chikboks differ again both from the Rugas and from the other divisions of the tribe. As soon as the cremation has been completed, the bones and the ashes are collected and thrown away. A *gelek* or small, round stool is made of bamboo and placed at the foot of the *maljuri* post in the deceased's house. The object of the stool is apparently to provide a seat for the spirit in case it should return. The usual offerings are made until the second ceremony has been performed. For this, four bamboos are set up so as to mark out a square. A fowl is killed and its blood smeared on the bamboos. The *mangpĭls*, which I have described and which are called *mangkĭng* by these people, are hung up between the posts; the stool is placed in the middle of the square, and the whole collection is set on fire. Both after the cremation and after the post-funeral ceremony the Chiboks plant a branch of the *mandal* tree by the side of the principal path to the village. To this branch are fastened the horns of the bull sacrificed. The branch easily takes root, and the result of several deaths in a Chibok village would be the planting of an avenue of *mandal* trees in its outskirts.

The post-funeral ceremony I have described is called *delangsō°a* by the Abengs, and *mangōna* or *mangrōa* by the other Garos.

There exists another form of *mangōna*, which is sometimes, but very rarely, performed by the Akawés and the Chisaks. It is very elaborate and entails great expense, so that it can only be performed at the obsequies of a rich man. The ceremony is said to be of Rabha origin, but whether the latter people ever observe it now I am unable to say. It is known as the *bolmadéa*. Like the *mangōna*, the principal features of the ceremony are dancing with the bones of the deceased and drinking. With regard to the bones, special mention is made by those who have seen the ceremony, of the frontal bone, which is carefully preserved for this function. It seems possible that in this we have a link with the Hill Kacharis, who believe it a duty to the dead to preserve this bone, and after the funeral ceremony to throw it into the Kopili river. (*Cf.* "Historical and Descriptive Account of the Kachari Tribes in the North Cachar Hills," by C. A. Soppit, Esq., p. 40.)



KIMAS OR MEMORIAL POSTS.

KIMAS.

Except among the Rugas and Chiboks, it is the custom throughout the hills to put up memorial posts in front of a dead person's house as soon as possible after the cremation ceremony. These are known by the name of *kima*. They are usually placed under the eaves of the houses, and may be put up at more than one house to commemorate the same person. Each *kima* consists of a pair of posts stuck into the ground, from which they rise to a height of from two to four feet. One post is sometimes carved in the semblance of a human face, while its companion is adorned with several rows of notches only. The first is supposed to be a likeness of the deceased, and the second is used to support the horns of the bull sacrificed at the cremation. In villages which do not possess an artist of sufficient skill to carve a human face, the latter is dispensed with, and two notched posts are prepared. When the face is carved, it is customary to adorn the figure with some of the deceased's wearing apparel and ornaments. I have seen one, for instance, clothed with a woman's *riking* or petticoat and wearing ear-rings and a *kadisil* or ornamented browband. Another similarly attired, was marred by a European hat, and an open umbrella fastened above it. A *rang* or gong is often broken and set up upon a stick beside the *kima*.

These *kimas* are a pathetic sight, especially when sickness has been rife. One village that I saw not long ago had been decimated by *kala-azar*, and the main street presented a view of fine large houses, abandoned and allowed to fall into ruin. In front of each was a little row of these *kimas* to indicate how many members of the family had fallen victims to the disease. The photograph which is here reproduced was taken in this village, and it will show how the memory of the dead has been cherished.

Among the Garos of the eastern hills there exists a peculiar custom by which a traveller is made aware of the death of an important person in the village which he is approaching. A *kima*, called *bolpil* in this case, is carved and placed in the principal path leading to, and at a distance of about quarter of a mile from the village.

GENNA.

The word which has been chosen to head this chapter has been borrowed from the Naga tribes, among whom it seems to convey the meaning of social prohibition or religious interdict. It may therefore be translated as taboo. Its equivalent among the Garos is the word *marang*, in which, however, the idea of "unlucky" must be added to "unlawful." The taboo which exists among the Naga tribes and the Khasis exists also among the Garos, though in a modified form. Among the former tribes the *genna* extends to a whole village, while in the latter tribe it rarely goes beyond single individuals. In one instance only does the taboo extends to a community, and that is the prohibition for any one in a village to visit the fields on the day on which a child is born. It is thought that whatever crop is visited on such a day will be cursed and blighted.

Of individual *marang* or taboo there are many examples. It is *marang* to kill an elephant, though the people never hesitate to kill one if they can, and if to do so is profitable to them. It is *marang* for a person to eat an orange or a pumelo before certain crops have been harvested. In this case the ill-luck may be transmitted to a person who, though innocent himself, happens to have entertained a transgressor of the rule. It is *marang* for a man to wear the clothes of his sister's husband, and for a woman to touch the clothes of a near male relative such as her uncle, brother, or sister's husband.

In addition to deeds which are unlawful, and which call down upon the doer the displeasure of the spirits, there are a number of circumstances over which man has no control, and yet are *marang* and portend evil. If white ants or rats eat articles of wearing apparel, such as a man's loincloth or a woman's petticoat, it is thought that the owner will die, and the same warning will be accepted by the owner of the house on the roof of which a cock crows in the evening, or by the owner of a hen which tries to crow like a cock. For a pig to enter a dwelling house is also considered unlucky.

DREAMS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

Belief in dreams is universal among the Garos, and numberless interpretations exist in which implicit trust is placed. I have collected a few which are typical of the rest. To dream of building a house means the death of a near relation of the dreamer. To dream of the catching of fish means the coming of wealth. I have mentioned elsewhere the importance of dreaming a good dream after cutting the *ōpata* before commencing to clear land for cultivation. The best dream that can then be dreamt is about sand, for it means a plentiful crop of rice. To dream of an old man's white hair means that the cotton crop will be a bumper one. Litigants believe that the ultimate success or failure of their suit is predicted in dreams, and the unlucky man who dreams of having made the water muddy in wading through a stream believes that his case is already lost.

Death for the dreamer or his relations is presaged in a number of ways. To dream of cutting hair means that a bear will kill the dreamer, while to dream of a falling stone indicates a fatal blow from an elephant's tusk. The breaking of a right back tooth (in a dream) is a warning of death for the dreamer. These examples could be indefinitely multiplied, for each division of the tribe has its own ideas on the subject, and its own interpretations. The examples I have given are from an Abeng source, though typical of the general belief.

While the Garo is so implicit a believer in the warnings and promises conveyed in dreams, he is by no means content to accept an evil dream without first making an effort to avert the misfortune which it foretells. The ceremony necessary for averting evil of this nature is called *tatpronga*, and is performed in the following manner. After a bad dream, the dreamer goes into the jungle and collects a handful of a reed-like grass called *sĭmu*. This he keeps by him until the following morning, when, an appointment having been made, the *kamal* comes to his house at sunrise. The two go out together to the right-hand corner of the dreamer's house (if the dreamer is a woman they go to the left-hand corner on going out), and there the priest strikes the dreamer on both sides of the body with the *simu* grass, repeating certain exorcisms the while. The two then

repair to the nearest stream carrying a cock with them. The bird is killed, and its blood allowed to fall into a little trough-shaped boat made of plantain stem. The boat is then launched into the stream, and as it starts on its voyage, the dreamer steps into the water and bathes himself. The meaning of the symbol is that the spirits having been appeased by the prayers of the priests, the chastisement of the dreamer, and the sacrifice of the fowl, the boat is allowed to bear away with it the *marang* or ill-luck which the dream portended.

Most deep, still pools in rivers are regarded with superstitious dread by all Garos, for they are thought to be the abodes of the Bugarik, a lovely siren who devours human beings. She has beautiful hair which floats on the current, for in no other way can it be kept from getting entangled. She has the body of a woman, and arms, but no legs. The opinion regarding her character is not quite unanimous, for while some think she is a well-disposed spirit, others declare that she kills women in order to add their hair to hers, and will kill men if she can catch them. A kind of iguana, called *arenga*, is said to be the *Bugarik's* servant, and is believed to seize men and women for her.

The Garos have a very real terror of ghosts and evince the greatest dread of going near a burial-place after nightfall. There is a popular belief in the existence of the Mat-mémang, a headless ghost with eyes in its chest. It is said to be the ghost of Mégam-Airipa-Mandé-Singéripa, to whom I have referred more than once as the first man to die. To the Abengs this ghost is known as Maōpa-Chandōpa. He is said to be a mischievous spirit, who throws stones at people's houses to frighten them. A person who is thus persecuted becomes thin and ill, and eventually dies. To see the ghost is a certain presage of death for some member of the family of the seer.

A very curious form of superstitious belief is that death can be caused by the simple process of placing some hairs of the person conspired against with a little earth and some snippings of his or her clothing into a section of a bamboo. The conspirator offers these to some evil spirit, and prays that death may come to his enemy. He then hangs up the bamboo in his house over the fireplace, and it is believed that the person

whose life is thus aimed at will waste away and die. Another form of the same thing is to place some of the fæces of the enemy into an earthenware pot and bury it in a white ants' nest, after having invoked the aid of a spirit. This practice is known by the name of *dakteka* or *susĭka*.

An old woman one day came to me in court with a complaint against her young husband. She alleged that he was trying to cause her death by the process first described, in order that he might marry a young and pretty girl on whom he had set his affections.

SECTION V.

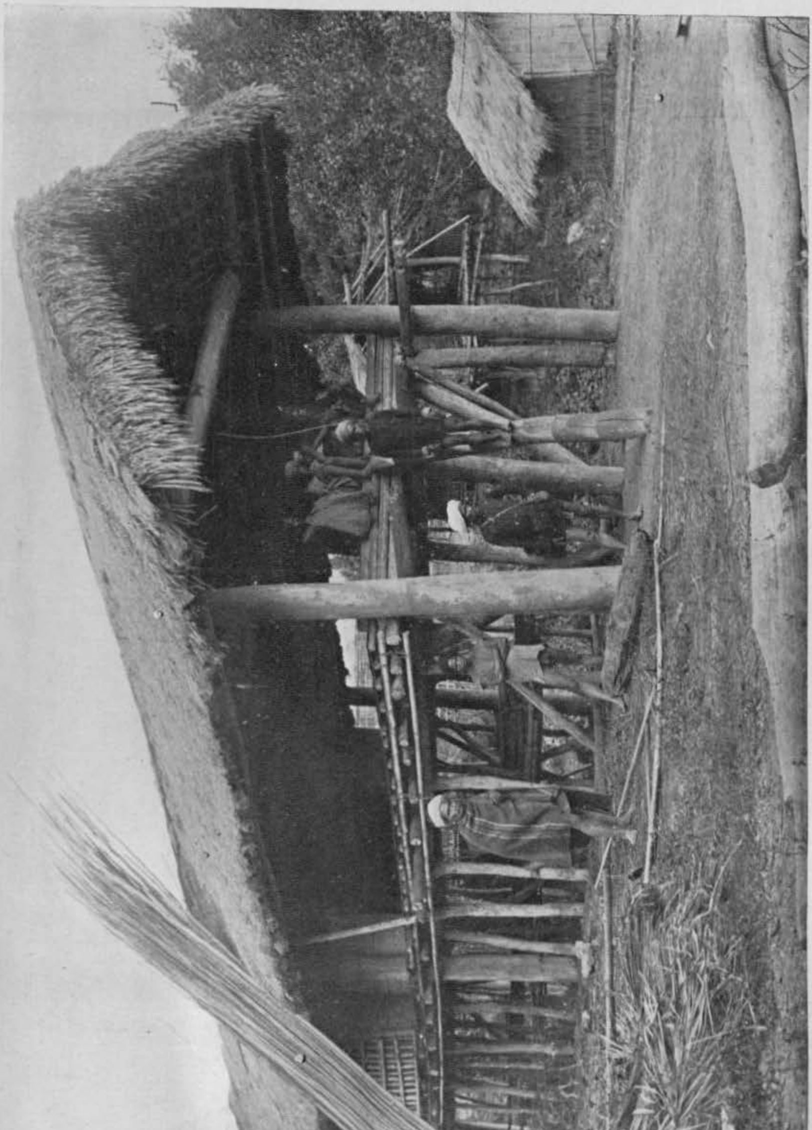
FOLKLORE.

THE Garos possess a large number of verses and stories which in themselves would make an interesting study, but would increase the size of this work beyond the limits allowed. These tales and songs have been handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Each of the many ceremonies which I have described in another chapter seems to have its appropriate story or song, and the priests recite or sing them when occasion requires. As the tribe is divided into many sections, the song or recitation adapted to any one occasion often varies according to locality, but there are many stories which are known throughout the hills.

The stories in prose are usually in the spoken dialects, but the verses are in an archaic diction which is very difficult to understand. The difficulty is accentuated by the inability of the Garos to distinguish verbs from nouns and by the entire absence of articles.

I had the good fortune to find a Garo priest who was both willing and able to assist me in translating, and who repeated to me a number of tales and verses so that I could reduce them to writing. I was further much assisted by a Christian Garo who, notwithstanding his adoption of another creed, had yet retained a very fair knowledge of Garo beliefs and their customs at various ceremonies. To my sorrow this man died, but not before he had given me some valuable assistance.

The natural reticence of the Garos, to which I have already alluded, hindered me greatly in this part of my research, and had I not met these two men, I should have found my task much more difficult than it has proved. As it is, I have been able to collect a number of the best-known stories and verses.



In some of the latter I have not been able to give an absolutely literal translation, for many thoughts and Garo idioms are untranslatable without long explanations.

Dō° kruni Kata.

I

Badiaba chasongō A°chikrangni gisepō man°écha°gipa mandé saksa gnangchim. Uni nokō uni jīk, niōtang, démé°chik arō nokkoldrang gnangchim. Démé°chik sakbri dal°batgipa sakgnini bimung Awīl aro Sīngwīl. Iamang sakgnia mé°tra sokaha arō sakgnian namen nambéa arō nitōbéa. Chongipa sakgnini bimung Nōsé arō Dimsé.

Ia mé°chik bisarangni ambitang, chongmōtan ua man°écha°gipani niōtang, namen namgijagipa ong°achim, arō a°tangni su°tangrangna ka° sajachim. Awīl arō Sīngwīl mi su°é rongdikō mérongkō donōdé, ua mérongni ningō srik srik angalrangkō donachim, mikō songōde mi°dikō srik srik méséki arō knidingrangkō donachim, arō chi kō°ōdé chibasingō an° chengrangkō donachim.

Iandaké ua buchuma a°tangan su°tangrangkō dokjaōba, uamang°ni ma°gipachi jringjring doka man°atrongachim.

Changsaō indaké ong°aha; ua mé°chik bisarangni ma°gipa jamōni mikō bīkoté, ukō naké, ram°é, su°sōchina arō jamanō mikō song°é arō chirangkō kō°é dongsōchina Awīl arō Sīngwīlna aganému, a°bachi ré°angaha.

Ma°gipani ja°manō uamang abisamikō nakémusrekō ram°aha. Uamang°ni, nōgipa Nōsé arō Dimséba uamang baksachīm. Ia chonchongipa na°nōtangrang

The Story of the Doves.

In a former generation there dwelt among the Garos a very rich man. With him lived his wife, his daughters, his mother-in-law, and servants. The names of the two eldest daughters were Awīl and Sīngwīl. These two had reached womanhood, and both were very good and very beautiful. The two youngest were called Nōsé and Dimsé.

Now the grandmother of these girls, the mother of the rich man's wife, was very wicked and did not love her granddaughters. If, after pounding rice, Awīl and Sīngwīl placed it in the cooking-pot and put it on to boil, she used by stealth to put dirt and hairs into it, and if they drew water, she would put sand into the basin.

In this manner, although the old woman did not beat her grandchildren, she was the cause of their being constantly beaten by their mother.

One day it happened that the mother of the two girls, having taken some paddy from the granary, told Awīl and Sīngwīl to thresh and dry and pound and cook it, and to draw water, and then she went to the field.

When their mother had gone, the two sisters, having threshed the paddy, put it out in the yard to dry. Their younger sisters, Nōsé and Dimsé, were with them. Then, as the little ones cried to be taken to the river to bathe,

dĭngolanigĭmĭn auna ĭné chibimachi ré°na grapé mong°rokrokana, ambitangō mikō nitĭmchina agané, chibimachi auna ré°dilangaha.

Bimaōnа sokōa na°tokkō niké rim°maha arō na°nōtangrangni grapna an°chengkō mandé daké rōdilaha, arō iandaken uamang salkō ré°ataha. Ja°manō na°tok mang gitam mangmangkō ra°é sket bakket nokōna ré°baha. Uamang abisa sakbrini chibimachi dongmitingon, uamang°ni ambitang mi ram°akō ĭté, a°kol chō°é, unō mikō donnusōaha. Unigĭmĭn Awĭl arō Sĭngwĭl nokōna sokmanō, mikō su°na niōa, mikō nikjajok, arō ambitangō sing°ōa "mikōdé wakchanggipok arō dō°rekgipu chon°né cha°tokaha" ĭné tol°sōaha. Unon uamang ma°gipana kené, sketsket jamōnikō mi bikotému, naké su°aha. Uōchachan uamang°ni ma°gipa sokbaha, arō mi su°na matsōgijani ja°pangkō sing°ōa, uamang°dé aganchakna amgija jrip-jrip dongaria. Indiba uamang°ni ambitang uamang°kō mikō su°gija rōari dō°rekgipu arō wak changgipokna alduaha ĭné jōté on° sōaha. Unon uamang°ni ma°gipa uamang°kō am°boljachi salrōrō salmitalé, sibokpĭlé dokaha. Iandaké ambitangni jōté jōté on°sōrongani gĭmĭn, uamang salanti doka man°rongachim.

Salsaō ua buchumani iandaké jōté on°ani gĭmĭn uamang°ni ma° gĭpa uamang°kō doké, walgĭmĭk wak nolō chipchangé donaha. Pringwal seng°ōba uamang°kō chipchangakō watgija arō mikō, chikō on°gijan, uamang°ni ma°gĭpa a°bachi ré°angariaha. Ini ja°manō adita bisarang uamang°ni nok saraō gĭla ka°lé rōengachim arō uamang°ni gĭla rongsa

owing to the heat, they asked their grandmother to watch the paddy, and led them to the river.

Having reached the river, they saw a fish and caught it, and because their young sisters began to cry, they made figures in the sand, and thus the time passed. After catching three fish they an quickly home. While these four sisters were at the river, their grandmother swept up the dried paddy, dug a hole, and hid the paddy in it. When Awĭl and Sĭngwĭl reached the house and looked for the paddy, to pound it, they could not see it, and the grandmother said "a pig with white sides and a capon have eaten it up." Then, fearing their mother, they took some more grain from the granary, threshed it and pounded it. Their mother, returning just then, asked why the work was not finished, but they could not answer, and kept silence. Their grandmother replied that owing to their having wandered away, a capon and a white-sided pig had eaten the paddy. Then their mother beat them severely with a piece of wood. In this manner, owing to the lies of their grandmother, they were beaten every day.

One day it happened that owing to their grandmother's false accusation, their mother beat them and shut them up for the night in a pig-sty. Early next morning, she went to the field without giving them food or water or releasing them. After a time, some children began to play the "*gila*" in front of their prison, and one of their *gilas* (a kind of bean) rolled into the house in which

Awĭl arō Sĭngwĭlkō chipchangé donram waknolchina teng°napaha. Bi°sa saksa ua gĭlakō ra°na ré°angōa, Awĭl arō Sĭngwĭlkō nikaha. Unon Awĭl "dō°gakō ōé onōdé anga nang°na gĭlakō on°gen, ong°jaōdé gĭlakō on°jawa" ĭné ua bi°sana aganon, ua dō°gakō ōaha arō an°tang gĭlakō ra°angaha, arō uamang abisaba bakbakan wak nolōni ong°kataha.

Iandaké uamang wak nolōni ong°katmanō Awĭl Sĭngwĭlkō ĭnaha "nōnō na°a rasongni dō°nolrangonikō dō°ōni kĭmĭl arō grangrangkō kolamébōkang; anga nang°ni uarangkō kolammitingon mikō song°sōna." Unon nōgĭpa dō°kĭmĭlrangkō kolamna ré°angaha; uni salon abitanga pagipamang°ni dō°rekgĭpukō dokému mibijak song°aha arō ua dō°ōni kĭmĭlrangkōba chimongé donaha.

Nōgĭpa dō°kĭmĭlrangkō chimongé ra°baha, abisan mikō cha°aha. Uni ja°manō Awĭl aganaha "hai nōnō a°chinga dō°kru pĭlé bĭlé katna; a°chinga baditana doka man°gĭnok, jangĭl sagĭnok" ĭné dō°kĭmĭlō stékō nongnongé wa°alchi angdingding angdingdingé nō°gĭpani bé°en gĭmĭkkō dō°kĭmĭlkō tapaha; ja°manō Sĭngwĭlba uandaken Awĭlni bé°en gĭmĭkkō dō°kĭmĭl tapaha arō dō°kru pĭlaha.

Iandaké dakmanōa, uamang abisa nokĭngōna bĭldōé niaha, arō uandaken noksaōni noksaōna bĭlrōrōé, nié nien, song gĭmĭkkō wĭlwĭlé bĭlna amaha arō, uamang dō°kru pĭlsrangaha. Unikōa uamang ma°gipani a°a gamaōna bĭlangé sépangōni bolō baéaha arō iandaké mĭkōaha. "Gukurugitu-gu-guk, am°bol mandal busuchi doka amara, guk-guk; isaĭ ré°ru bitolchi sol°a kuria,

Awĭl and Sĭngwĭl were confined. One of the children came to fetch it and saw Awĭl and Sĭngwĭl. Then Awĭl said to him, "If you will open the door, I will give you your *gila*, otherwise you shall not have it." So the boy opened the door, and the sisters quickly came out of the pig-sty.

When they had come out, Awĭl said to Sĭngwĭl, "Sister, go to the hen-house and collect feathers; while you are collecting them I will cook you rice to eat." Then the younger sister went and collected feathers, and the elder one killed her father's capon, cooked it with vegetables, and collected its feathers also. The younger sister having collected feathers, brought them, and the two ate their food. Then Awĭl said, "Sister let us turn ourselves into doves; that we may not be beaten and have sore backs."

Then she rubbed the feathers with wax, and having heated it at the fire, she stuck the feathers all over the body of her younger sister, and Sĭngwĭl in her turn stuck feathers all over Awĭl's body, and they turned into doves. The two sisters then flew on to the roof and looked around, flew from house to house and found that they had really turned into doves. Then they flew to the field where their mother was working and perching on a tree cooed as follows, "Gukuru-gitu-gu-guk, with the thorny wood of the mandal tree we were beaten, guk-guk, with a bundle of plantain leaves the younger was struck, guk-guk, Awĭl Sĭngwĭl sisters two, guk-guk, Nosé and Dimsé younger ones, guk-guk. As the rice was not pounded for our mother she beat us, guk-guk-guk, as there

guk-guk. Awĭl Sĭngwĭl abisa, guk-guk ; Nōsé Dimsé na°nōsa, guk-guk ; méa mébima gnang su°jachimé amara, guk-guk ; chia chiancheng gnang kō°jachimé apana, guk-guk, ama dokarikata guk-guk-guk, kuri dokambrangata guk-guk-guk."

Iakō knaé ma°gĭpa jagokaha, arō kenaha, maina dō°ōni iandaké mandé gita agané mikōakō mamungsalōba knarongjachim. Uni gĭmĭn ua nokō maiba afot ong°akon ĭné kenchaké nokōna ré°baha, arō bakan wak nolōnikō Awĭl arō Sĭngwĭlkō niaha, indiba ua uamang°kō nikjaha.

Uōchacha Awĭlni pagipa antichina ré°angachim ; uni nokō indaké afot ong°a ĭné ua mamungba uijachim. Ua antiōni nokōna ré°baenga, tik uōchacha songskōpangni gĭtĭng nokmaō ba°é dō°kru manggni indaké mikōsōaha. "Gukuru-gutu-guk-guk-guk, apa anti ré°bongjok, guk-guk-guk, dō°rekgĭpu olbongjok ; wak changgĭpu ra°bongjok guk-guk-guk. Awĭl Sĭngwĭl a°bisa, Nōsé Dimsé na°nōsa, gukuru-gutu-guk ; ba°ra ébongi chiné, matchu timori mō°é apa ré°bongjok, guk-guk-guk."

Pagipa ia knagrakō knaé, nokō maiba ong°aha ĭné kenchakaha arō gisĭkō jajrengbéé nokōna ré°baha. Nokōna sokōa benbébé uni jik dé°drang grapsōtokengakō arō singé pĭlakon uiaha. Awĭl Sĭngwĭlni pa°a ma°a uamang°na duk ongé grapmitingon, abisa nokĭngō ba°é mĭkōéaha. Unon ma°a pa°a a°tangmangni rang gam, ba°ra arō ripokrangkō saraōna bikoté dō°kru abisana mésoké aganaha. "Ia gamrang arō ba°ra ripokrang pĭlakan na°simang°nin, nasimang°na iarangkō ripingé tarié donaha, chinga siodé sawa man°rikgen, na°simangan

was sand in the water drawn for our father we were caused to wander, guk-guk-guk."

Hearing this, the mother was astounded and frightened, for she had never before heard a bird sing with a human voice. Therefore, thinking that something must have happened, she went home and looked in the pig-sty for Awĭl and Sĭngwĭl, but could not find them.

At that time Awĭl's father was at the market, and did not know that anything had occurred at his house. On his way back from market, near the village, two doves perched upon a *giting* tree and cooed thus together, "Gukuru-gutu-guk-guk-guk, father has gone to the market, guk-guk-guk, he carries home some capons, guk-guk-guk : he brings a white-backed pig, guk-guk-guk. Awĭl and Sĭngwĭl sisters two, Nōsé and Dimsé younger ones. He comes wearing a black striped cloth and leading a small bull, guk-guk-guk."

The father hearing the voices, feared that something had happened at home, and was much troubled. On arrival, he found his wife and two children weeping, and was told what had happened. While their father and mother were weeping, the two sisters settled on the roof. Then the father and mother took all their valuables and laid them out in the court-yard, and said to the doves, "All these valuable clothes and necklaces are yours ; for you they have been kept ; if we die, who shall wear them ; you are the owners, now, therefore, leave your dove shapes and become human beings again. You have been beaten often owing to the wickedness of your

man°gnigĭpa, unigĭmĭn da°ō na°simang dō°kru bimangkō galé mandé pĭlpĭlé ré°babō. Na°simang ambitangni namgijani gimĭn na°simang jring-jring doka man°aha, uni namgija darangkon chinga uitokaha. Da°ōdé na°simangko dokjawa, unigĭmĭn ō! dé°drang ré°babō noktangō dongébō."

Ma°a pa°a iandaké grapé mol°molōba uamang mandé ong°pĭljaha, indiba uamang aganaha "na°simang chingna ka°sabébéōdé riksmĭt dĭnggnikō wa°gongō sitéé donpabō." Unon uamang°ni ma°a pa°a bakan riksmĭt dĭnggnikō wa°gongō sitéaha, arō abisa uarangkō balé chelachi bĭlé katangaha.

grandmother, we know all her ill deeds. Now you will never more be beaten, oh children, come to your home again."

But in spite of their parents' tears and prayers, they would not return to their former shapes, but said, "If you really love us, hang up two necklaces on the *wa°gong*" (a bamboo used for hanging clothes on). Then their parents quickly hung up the necklaces, and the sisters picking them up, flew far away.

II.

Ia ong°arangni ja°manō biapsaō Aual arō Gunal mĭnggĭpa adasa a°a ō°engachim. Uamang°ni a°a ō°a sépangō bolrikéō dō°kru manggni ba°é indaké mĭkōaha "Gukuru - gutu - guk - guk - guk, Awĭl Sĭngwĭl abisa, guk-guk, Aual Gunal adasa, guk-guk." Iakō jongipa Gunal knachengaha arō "Ada, ada, suama suama? dō°kru manggnidé mandégita ku°sik agané mĭkōenga mai?" ĭné adatang Aualna aganaha. Indiba ua ia katakō bébéra°jaha arō ka°ōnangé jongĭpakō atépongchi siboké dokaha.

Iani adita ja°manō apsandaké ua dō°krurang mĭkōtaiōa Aualba ukō knaha. Unon Aual jongĭpakō mol°molaha, arō adasa ku°mongé a°tangtangni kni bikani kabĭkchi ja°ga saé, misalni mikō saté donaha. Unon Aualni ja°gaō Awĭl, arō Gunalni ja°gaō Sĭngwĭl nangaha. Dō°krurangkō ma°ōa Aualdé a°tangni palkō

Soon after these occurrences, two brothers named Aual and Gunal were clearing land. Close to where they were working two doves settled on a tree, and began to coo "Gukuru-gutu-guk-guk-guk, Awĭl and Sĭngwĭl sisters two, Aual and Gunal brothers two." The younger hearing this said, "Brother, brother, listen, do you hear two doves talking like men?" But the elder brother did not believe him, and getting angry, beat him with the handle of his chopper. A little later, when the doves cooed again in the same way, Aual also heard them. Then Aual begged his younger brother's pardon, and having become reconciled, they set snares made of their hairs, and scattered rice from their midday meal. Thus Awĭl fell into Aual's snare and Sĭngwĭl into that of Gunal. When they had caught the doves,

sō°é cha°aha, indiba Gunaldé kachaō chĭpé namédaké joton ka°é jĭlaha.

Gunal dō°krukō kachaō chĭpé, mi arō chidrangkō on°nangé, nokon doné, a°bachi ré°angrongachim. Salsaō indaké jensalō Aual ma°rang pĭlakan a°bachi ré°angtokaha, dō°kru mandé pĭlé kachaōni ong°katrikému, mikō song°é, chikō kō°é, ja°manō nokdrangkō wĭtroké chijengjeng daké, donsōaha; uni ja°manō dō°kru pĭltaé kachaō napé dongsōaha. Aual adasa arō uamang ni ma°a, pa° a a°bachini ré°baōa iarangkō niké aiaō inmanaha, maina iarangkō sawa dakaha ukō uamang mamungba uijaha. Jéba ong°bō uamang mikō cha°é, uni walkō jé ka°éba ong° china ré°ataha. Sal gĭpĭnō uamang cha°é ringé a°bachi ré°angtaiaha. Unsalōba dō°kru apsandaké mikō song°é tarié dongsōaha. Unon uamang mémangnima miténi kam ĭné kenaha arō jajrengaha.

Salsaō uamang Aualkō iani japang mai ukō bikotchina ĭné nokō donangaha.

Aual amkō dōlé songdōémung kōsakchinikō barachi pĭndapaha, arō mikron rongnina tiktak raprué, asongé, tĭmé niaha. Indiba adita dongon ua hinggok ra°é tusiaha. Uni tusimitingon, dō°kru mirangkō song°é, doné, kachaō napé dongaha; unigĭmĭn ua mamungkōba uijaha Ja°manō Aualni pa°a, ma°aba tĭmé niaha, indiba uamangba tusiani gĭmĭn mamungjapangkō bikotna amjaha. Ja°mankitĭkō Gunal tĭmé niaha, arō ua maikai tusina sĭkjawa, indaké a°tangni ja°sikō raaha, arō karikō nongaha. Unigĭmĭn ua tusina manjaha, indiba sa°akō chaké tom-tom indiba tusigija gĭngtĭngkō gamataha. Unon ukō tusiaha ĭné chanchié,

Aual cooked and ate his bird, but Gunal put his into a cage and took great care of it. Having put his dove into a cage, Aual used to give it food and water, and then go to his field. One day, when all the relations of Aual had thus gone to their fields, the dove turned into a woman, and coming out of the cage, boiled rice, drew water, swept the floor and sprinkled it with water, and then turning into a dove again entered the cage and waited. On the return of Aual's parents from the field, they were much astonished, for they did not know who had done this. However, they ate the rice little caring who had lighted the fire. The next day they ate their food and went to their fields. That day also the dove cooked and prepared the rice. Then they were much troubled, for they thought it must be the work of ghosts or spirits. One day they left Aual to discover the cause of this wonder. He rolled a mat into a cylinder, covered it with a cloth, made two holes for his eyes, and watched. But after a while he yawned and fell asleep. While he slept, the dove cooked the rice, entered the cage and waited, so that Aual knew nothing. Afterwards Aual's parents watched, but as they also fell asleep, they found out nothing. Lastly, Gunal watched, and so as not to sleep, he cut his toe and rubbed it with salt. Therefore, he could not sleep, but though suffering, he feigned sleep and snored. Then thinking him asleep, Sĭngwĭl came out of the cage, and after cooking the rice and vegetables she swept the floor. When she came by sweeping, he came

kachaōni ong°kataha arō mi bijak song°manémung, nokkō witrokaha. Jensalō Gunalni sé-pangchi wĭtrokbaha, bakan ong°-katé, Sĭngwĭlni jakgitokkō rim°aha. Sĭngwĭl a°tangkō wat-china Gunalkō inaha "Na°a angkō watbō, unōdé nang°na namgen, indiba watjaōdé nam-jawa." Indiba Gunal ukō wat-jaha; unon Sĭngwĭl una aganaha "Anga nang°ni agana gita nang°-kō kĭmgen, indiba ang°kō kĭmani gĭmĭn nang°na maiba namgija ong°ōba na°a angkō matnangna man°jawa." Gunal mamun-dakéba matnangjawa ĭné ku°ra°chakon, ua dō°kru pĭlpĭljaha arō untaltal ukō kĭmaha.

quickly out and seized her by the wrist. In order to free herself, Sĭngwĭl said, "Let me go, then it will be well with you, if not, it will not be well." But Gunal would not let her go, so Sĭngwĭl said, "As you wish it, I will marry you, but if from doing so any harm comes to you, you must not reproach me." Gunal promised that he would never reproach her, and she did not again turn into a dove, but married him.

III.

Gunal Sĭngwĭlkō kĭmé, nok dĭngtangkō rĭké dongaha. Cha-ngsaō Aual Gunalkō ang°ké, na°-tok am°na chiringchi rimangaha. Uamang na°tok rĭmrōrōan adita chelachina sokangaha arō Gunal ang°ké am°mitingon Aual chini kōsakchi mitinōna ré°angé, a°-tangkō nappĭlé dramō a°kol chō°-aha. Ja°manō Gunalkō ōkamé, "Jong, ianō ang°kému na°chi gnang. Anga nengbéaha, uni gĭmĭn na°a adita chō°kuému knokkubō" ĭné aganani gĭmĭn Gunal adita chō°é knokaha." Unon adatang bakan a°dapaha arō rō°ongrangkō sĭnjeté doné, nokchina katangaha. Uni song-ōna sokō, Gualni jik aro ma°a pa°a Gunal baō singōa, "Anga Gunalkō nokchi ré°na mongba-hachĭm, indiba ua ré°bajaha arō aganaha 'Anga nokchi ré°anggi-ja jéchiba brangangen, ang jikna aganbō ua angna duk ong°jachina arō gĭpĭnkō kĭmchina ĭné aga-nata'" ĭné aganaha.

Having married Sĭngwĭl, Gunal built himself a separate house. One day Aual took Gunal to the river to catch crabs and fish. In fishing they wandered to some distance, and while Gunal was searching for crabs, Aual went further up stream and dug a hole in the bank that he could enter into. Then he called to Gunal, "Brother, here are crabs and fish; I am very tired, come and dig a little and catch them." Then the younger brother came and did so. His elder brother then quickly covered him with stones, pressed them down, and went home. When he reached his village, Gunal's wife and parents asked where he was. He answered, "I tried to bring Gunal home, but he said to me, 'I will not go home, but wish to wander; tell my wife that she must not trouble about me, but is to marry another husband.'"

Gunal's dog Iri was strong of

Iri mĭngipa Gunalni achak matgrik, Gunal baksan jarikangachim. Ua a°tang nokgĭpakō Aualni gōpé galakō uié, nokchina katbaé, Gunalni jikgipa suksuk saksak grapmésōkaha jé Gunalkō Aual gōpé galbaha. Sĭngwĭlba achakni mangsongakō uié, "Hai matgrik ja°banda, Irija Gangaja, nang°gitel, nang°kiringkō sandina" ĭné mangot sĭljangi dotsa, ambĭk amrōri kĭngsa, gijĭp ampati patsa, dō°mé dangasĭl gongsa ra°angé Gunalkō sandina ré°angaha. Iri rama mésoké skang skang ré°angaha. Gunalkō gopé galangramōna sokōa, ukō bikotému, chiō bé°enkō rongtalé su°srangaha ; ja°manō amroriō tuatému, gijĭpchi jĭpongé, "Tatara-Rabuga na°a jama nokgĭpa, janggin biambi ; angni kawatang dongatangna jama ronbō, janggi sĭkbō, ijĭmĭtbō, a°kuĭtbō, chongchongĭtbō, dengdengĭtbō" ĭné mangot sĭljangichi amrōrikō dokrōaha. Unon Gunal tangchaha, unikōa uamang nokōna ré°baha.

limb, and had followed Gunal. He had seen Aual bury his master, and came crying to Gunal's wife to tell her what had happened. Sĭngwĭl understood the dog's meaning and said, "Come, Iri Strong-legs, we will search for thy lord and master." Then, taking with her an iron rod, a fine mat, a fan and a bunch of cock's-tail feathers, she started off to look for Gunal. The dog ran in front to show the way. When they reached the spot where Gunal was buried, she dug him out, washed his body in water, placed him on the mat, fanned him and prayed thus, "Tatara-Rabuga, thou owner of breath, the father of life, give breath to my husband, my dear one ; blow life into him." Then she struck the mat with the iron rod and Gunal came to life and they went home.

IV.

Uni ja°manō adita sal ré°angaha ; salsaō Aual Gunalkō dō°butok sa°akō ra°na ĭnému burungchi rimangaha. Jé bolchu nokmaō dō°ō sa°a ĭné Aual aganachim uni dul mĭk kolachi ong°achim.

Uamang bolni japangōna sokōa, Aual antangdé bolō gakatgija, Gunalkō gakatataha. Ua bolō mamung dō°ōba sa°jaha. Aual Gunalkō sō°otna mangsongésa ianōna rimbaha. Jensalō Gunal bolku°chotōna gakatangaha, ua maikai a°ōna ong°onbana man°gija, ga°aké ong°jaōba bolkambéon dongé cha°na man°gija sichina ĭné mitéō indaké

Some days later, Aual took Gunal into the forest with him to search for birds' nests. The cotton-tree in which Aual said that there were nests was thirty cubits round.

When they reached the foot of the tree, Aual would not climb it himself, but made Gunal do so. The birds had not built any nests on that tree. Aual had only brought Gunal in order to kill him. When Gunal had reached the top of the tree, Aual, in the hope that he would fall and kill himself or die of starvation on the top of the tree, prayed thus to the spirits : "Tatara-Rabuga,

mol°molé aganaha. "Tatara-Rabuga, jangikō ma°sina, jamakō dingchotna, salgisakchina, rangkanbéchina dédōbō saldōbō." Unon bolba bakan salgi nangidoté chuaha. Indakmanō Aual noktangōna ong°ona man°jaé, bolon dongrikariaha.

Gunalni achak Iri ia katakō Sĭngwĭlna aganōa, ua achakni ja°man ja°man ja°rĭkéGunalkōsandiangaha arō ukō nikéaha. Indiba ukō maidaké a°ōna ra°ongen, mamungba cholkō nikjaé ua bolchuni japangon sal salsni, wal walsni grapari dongaiaha. Ja°manō Sĭngwĭl dō°drangkō Gunalkō a°ōna ra°onchina mol°molbéaha, indiba uamang knachakjaha. Unikōa dō°tĭlengkō mol°moléa, ua Gunalkō ra°onōdé una maikō on°gen ĭné sing°aha. Singwĭl aganaha "Rang, tangka, ba°ra, ripok iarangōni jékō bi°gen, ukon nangna on°gen." Dō°tĭleng aganaha "Angna kō°tĭp paguri gitchak patsa arō ruapatkō mangsa on°aibō, unōdé anga Gunalkō ba°ongen." Unon Sĭngwĭl uarangkō una ra°baé on°aha arō uarangkō man°é, dō°tĭleng bakan Gunalkō a°ōna ba°onbaha. Unikōa Sĭngwĭl ukō auaté, nokchina rĭmbaha.

that his life may end, that his breath may be cut off, raise up, draw up to the skies." Then the tree commenced to grow till it reached as high as the sky, so that Aual could not come down to return home, but remained on the tree.

Gunal's dog Iri told this to Sĭngwĭl, who, following the dog, went to search for Gunal and found him. But she could see no way of bringing him down to earth, and stayed weeping for seven days and nights at the foot of the cotton tree. Then Sĭngwĭl begged the birds to bring Gunal down, but they would not listen to her. At last, the woodpecker asked what she would give him if he brought down Gunal. Sĭngwĭl replied, "I will give you anything you wish, gongs, money, clothes, or necklaces." The woodpecker said, "If you will give me a red turban and an axe,* I will bring Gunal down." Sĭngwĭl went and fetched these things and gave them to the woodpecker, who quickly brought Gunal down to earth. Sĭngwĭl washed him and took him home.

V.

Indaké sal ru°utahaōa, pĭlé Aual Gunalkō anggal sō°na burungchi rim°angtaiaha. Burungōna sokōa, a°kolkō mandésa chō°é, am°bolkō a°kolō gapéba, uni kōsakō mandésa ong°pĭlé gataha arō wa°al sō°aha. Jensalō wa°al namen ching°chaha, Aual Gunalkō namédaké am°bolkō snĭlchina aganaha, arō Gunal bamtaté snĭlatmitingon

Some time after, Aual again took Gunal into the forest to burn charcoal. Having reached the forest, they dug a hole as deep as a man's height, and, having filled it with wood, they piled the wood up man-high above the ground, and set fire to it. When it was burning very brightly, Aual told Gunal to tend it carefully, and while he was

* The red turban and the axe are now the red crest on the bird's head and its sharp bill.

Aual ukō wa°alchi jitpakataha arō boltongrangkō uni kōsakō bang°é sĭnjeté doné a°tangdé noktangchina ré°baha.

Ja°manō Gunalni achak Iri uni jik Sĭngwĭlna aganéōa ua achak rĭm°bĭté arō ampatchi, gijĭp, dō°mé arō goldikkō ra°é, Gunalkō sō°é galbaōna ré°angé, ukō wa°alōnikō bĭkōté skangōnigita apsandaké tangchaataha. Unikōa Gunal gisĭkō ka°ōnangé aganaha "Anga changsa, changgnikō chakchikaha, bang°é chakchikna amjawa, basakōbadé sisrangnaba donga," uni gĭmĭn inpakdé a°jak sokchongmotgen ĭné mangsongé a°tangni nokō wak, matchu doké arō chu rongjōarangkō cheké, doké, damé, chrok mésaé ringaha, cha°aha.

Aualkō ringpachina arō cha°pachina pĭlnipĭl ōkamahaōba, kené ré°anggija sa daké nokpantétangon tuari dongariaha. Ja°manō Gunal bek rō°béaō chubĭtchi wé°é, Aualna ra°angaha, arō uni gitok ning chi bekkō su°ketataha, unon Aual siaha. Indakésa Gunal bōbĭlgri ong°é dongaha.

bending down to do so, Aual pushed him into the fire, heaped logs of wood on the top of him, and then went home.

Afterwards, Gunal's dog, Iri, told his wife Sĭngwĭl, and, taking the dog with her, and the fine mat, the fan, the feathers, and the rod, she went to the place, pulled him out of the fire, and, as before, brought him to life again.

Then Gunal became very angry, and said, "I have borne with him twice, and cannot endure any more; perhaps some day he may really kill me." Therefore, in order that he might revenge himself properly, he killed pigs and cattle at his house, drew much liquor, beat drums, danced, and ate and drank. He repeatedly invited Aual to eat and drink with him; but he, being afraid, would not do so, and, pretending that he was ill, stayed in his own house. Later in the day Gunal took a very long *bek* (gourd used for ladling liquor) full of liquor to Aual, and forced it down his throat, so that Aual died. From that day forth Gunal lived without enemies.

Funeral Wail for a Child by its Mother.

(1) Mé°mangni Bogiani ja°nengtakram,
Katchini Chanapani ka°sipéram,

(2) Apaba chōchong achonangbō né,
Dō°maba dédeng chadengangbō né.

(1) In the resting-place of the ghost Bogia,
Where the father of Chana took breath,

(2) Oh father, for a little while sit,
Oh bird, for a little while rest.

[The deceased is spoken of here and throughout the lament as *apa*, my father (a term of respect), and *dō°ma*, bird (the black cormorant).]

(3) Unō Chikmang asongōna ré°ō,
Balmang chigaōna gaō.

(3) When going to the country of Chikmang,
In going to the waters of Balmang.

[Chikmang is the name of the hill to which the spirits of the dead are supposed to go. Balmang is another name for the same place. *A°song* in the first line means country, and *chiga* in the second a place from which drinking-water is taken.]

(4) Mé°-mang misalcharam mĭnga,
Katchi wa°l-tot totram dona.

(4) It is called the place where the ghosts eat the midday meal,
Where the chief of ghosts strikes the flint and steel.

[The mourner is telling the dead child's spirit where it should halt by the way.]

(5) Boldak matchu karam ukon mĭnga,
Mé°mang waltot totram unon dona.

(5) It is called the place for tethering the bull to the *boldak* tree,
And the place where the ghosts strike flint and steel.

[Near the pool mentioned in verse 4 a tree is supposed to stand, to which the spirit on its way to Chikmang, tethers the bull which it has led away with it, before partaking of its midday meal.]

(6) Mé°mangni ramadilō Nawang rōsō°ongnawa né,
Katchini cholbibraō jugi sengsō°ong°nawa né.

(6) On the path of the spirit Nawang will be wandering about,
At the forked road of the demon the chief spirit will be waiting.

[Nawang is a demon who devours the souls of men on their way to Chikmang. The only means of escaping him is indicated in the next verse.]

(7) Nangni jaksĭl agĭnotkōsa gōangaribō,
Nangni dō°mé birikikōsa galangaribō.

(7) Cast down (before him) your arm-rings,
Throw down your bunches of cock's feathers.

[The *jaksil* is an iron ring worn on the arm above the elbow.

The feathers are those which are placed near the head of a corpse when it is laid out prior to cremation. The demon is supposed to scramble for these when they are thrown down before him, and the spirit has then a chance of slipping by. Women's earrings are said to be the rings that Nawang likes best.]

(8) Ukon Nawang Tikonsĭlpa mĭnga,
Jugi Rĭkchipbĭnpa dona.

(8) He is called Nawang, the father of Tikongsil,
And the father of the spirit Rikchibin.

(9) Angni salé chakgĭpamung, apasamung,
Chingni dé°éwingĭpasamung dō°masamung.

(9) Those who protected me were my children,
Those who covered my head were my sons.

[The mourner is bewailing the loss of her children. The word *chakgipa* signifies "one who defends," as with a shield; and *dé°éwingipa* "one who holds up something over the head."]

(10) Bolong Rakipa gita apara,
Bolsal Danipa gita dō° mara.

(10) Like Bolong the father of Raki (art thou), my father,
Like Bolsal the father of Dani art thou, my bird.

[Bolong is the name of a tree common in the Garo Hills, and Bolsal is the *sal* tree. The mother compares her child with two tall and straight trees.]

(11) Stĭlna rongmisina mriari dongamung,
Balwana balmisina gongdolari rōamung.

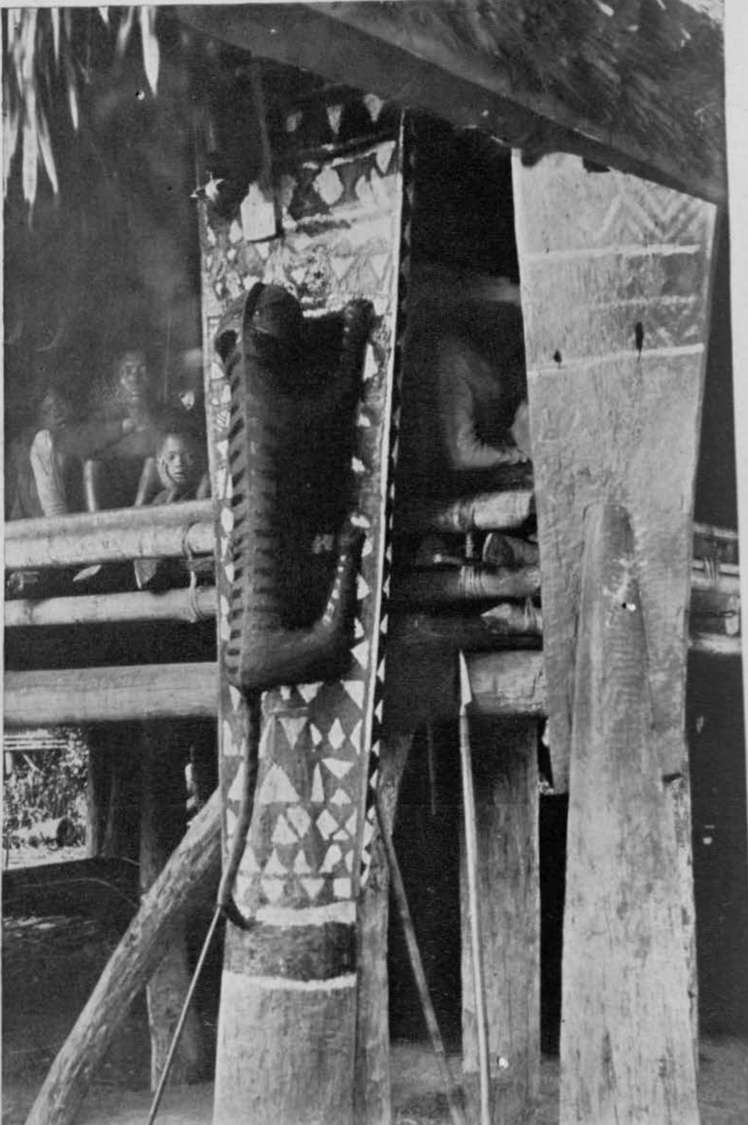
(11) Before the hailstorm (they are) strong and unbending,
To the hurricane they bend but do not break.

[Here the comparison is continued, and the beauty and strength of the dead are extolled.]

(12) Mitésa okuangsisa péarokon,
Katchisa japa cholsisa wangarokon.

(12) The starving spirit must have broken it (the life),
The spirit with the withered legs must have destroyed.

[The death of the child is attributed to the malevolence of an evil spirit.]



CARVED POST OF A NOKPANTÉ OR BACHELORS' HOUSE.

(13) Apani ang°rikikō miténi péakō knajajok,
Dō°mani ang°kambékō katchini wangakō haijajok.

(13) Father, that the spirits had broken my life I did not know,
Bird, that my tender shoot had been broken I did not know.

[Here the mourner likens herself to the tree, and her child to a young shoot.]

(14) Miténa ritchasana kambé dōtimé pineka apaba,
Katchi hajalna ja°pang chinoké agana dō°maba.

(14) For a hundred spirits thou hast appeared as the bunchy top of a tree, my father,
For a thousand demons thou hast been as the trunk of a fine tree, my bird.

(15) Miténa Rambudéna bijak namé pĭneka,
Katchina Rékonpanténa kambé namé agana.

(15) To the spirit Rambudé the beautiful leaves have been pointed out,
The demon Rékonpanté has thought my young shoots good.

(16) Indakésa mité péa apakō,
Katchi wanga dō°makō°.

(16) In this manner the spirits have broken my father,
Thus the demons have destroyed my bird.

(17) Ruabāsi té°rakcha apani ang°rikikō péa,
Mrĭtsamti sōjakcha dō°makō wanga.

(17) With an axe of small size my life was cut off,
With a small and light razor my bird was cut down.

[The axe and razor are spoken of as small and light, to convey the idea that the death was a sudden one.]

(18) Ha°ni bolong pangsamung apasamung,
Chini rongma tot°samung dō°masamung.

(18) As the one tree on earth (wert thou), oh! my son,
As the one stone in the river (wert thou), oh! bird.

[Her child was to her as the one tree and the one stone in the world.]

(19) Angni sĭnchi ja°niasamung apaba,
Chingni grong rĭmrokasamung dō°maba.

(19) For the reflection of my hump I am looking, my father,
And for the horn which I rubbed so tenderly, my bird.

[Here the simile is changed, and the mourner compares herself to a bull, and her child to her soft hump and beautiful horns.]

(20) Grong sĭmu sokjaōba apara,	(20) Though my horn (was like) the sprout of the *simu* grass, my father,
Kimé salarengjaōba dō°maba.	Though my tail was as a tufted plant, my bird.
	[In spite of its beauty, my child has been cut off. (The child is still compared with the parts of the bull.)]
(21) Jolané pĭnekjok angni okō kéaba,	(21) I who bore thee, must lay thee out in death,
Dandisĭlé aganjok angni jakō ra°aba.	I who held thee in my arms, must see thee lying dead.
(22) Chōchong achongbabōda apaba,	(22) For a little while sit, stand up, oh my father,
Dédeng chadengbabōda dō°-maba.	Rise and stand for an instant, oh bird.
(23) Ma°na tusitĭmjok ku°a-ganbōda,	(23) Say, why art thou sleeping ?
Ba°na mĭkkĭl joma apa ku°-mésokbōda.	Oh, show why thine eyelids are heavy.
(24) Miténi Salgirani munikō cha°chakakon,	(24) Perhaps the spirit Salgira has given thee the Muni plant,
Nokmani Susĭméni dō°dikkikō ra°chakakon.	Or the Nokma Susimé has brought thee the plant of slumber.
	[The Garos believe in the existence of a plant called *muni*, which possesses the properties of sending people to sleep. The first spirit named is that of the sun, and the second that of the moon.]
(25) Racha asongchana apa gabirangnabé,	(25) Oh son, do not lose the way and stray into a foreign land,
Nengba chigachana jangi mati-changnabé.	To the waters of Nengba do not wander like the solitary wild buffalo.
	[The mourner is exhorting the spirit of the deceased to remember his home, so that at the reincarnation it may return there.]
(26) Amatangcha Chikmang asongchana ja°ré°angbō,	(26) Go to Chikmang by the way thy fathers trod before thee,
Sokutangcha Balmang chi-gaōna ja°sokangbō.	Reach the waters of Balmang by the path of thy kinsmen.

(27) Apani mĭkkĭl tijikō nigawé,
Ku°chĭl rangrékō kadingé.

(27) Father, go looking about thee with thine eyelids raised,
And with the lip of pleasant smile.

(28) Asongōna ritchasana jaksi périkgopé,
Darangna mĭkkĭl on°chĭkgōpé.

(28) To a hundred countries cracking my fingers, I go,
And before all with downcast eyes.

[This cracking of the fingers and walking with downcast eyes is a sign of shame, the shame of the childless woman.]

(29) Apani ang°kisangō krachajok,
Dō°mani ang ja°manō chinga jaksi chikjok.

(29) Oh! son, behind me follows shame,
For my child I wander, biting my fingers.

SONG SUNG AT THE WANGALA FESTIVAL. PART OF THE SONG IS SUNG BY A MAN TO A YOUNG WOMAN, THEN FOLLOWS HER REPLY, AND LASTLY THE MAN'S FINAL REJOINDER.

(1) Ama, giting chagiting amasongba,
Mima ja°pang rongtambĭng dongasongba.

(1) My mother, thou growest like the banyan tree,
Like a grain of new-pounded rice art thou, my dear.

[The words "mother" and "father" are used throughout this and other songs as terms of respect, quite irrespective of the fact that the parties singing may be young men and girls. *Dongasong* is an Abeng word. It is best translated "my dear," and is supposed to be used only by persons between whom marriage is possible.]

(2) Salna skang baésa ĭmjima amaba.
Gangōrakō song°ésa tang sĭma dongaba.

(2) Before the sun shouldst thou have been created,
Thou art as the blue of new-drawn indigo.

(3) Durarikim bolgrim bol namgija chachenga,
Songdụ ancheng sridĭm chi namg'ja, chi senga.

(3) Though in the dark forests of Tura the bad tree grows, the good trees are there too,
Though in the midst of the Brahmaputra sand there is bad water, good water is there too.

(4) Na°song ma°masamung? bipa sĭngé nikuna,
Bolni majingkasamung aké songa cha°kuna.

(5) Bolongō dō°sĭk pagira midong ratpakarina,
Chalang anga ajora sokmé rĭmbakarina.

(6) Angchapakna darōba nang°pa nang°sé ĭnawa,

Ja°si gadep manakō rĭm°awa sala bō°nawa.

(7) Mĭkchi ong°na Banjanni gĭmbi dongasongba,
Ka°kō dokna Durani kĭmdé amasongba.

(8) Dō°ka Rajabalacha bĭlangjok,
Mirong bokdankō ra°najok dongasongba.

The girl replies.

(9) Siō tarimésané apaba,
Katō akgnisané dongané dongaba.

(4) From what motherhood art thou? I, asking, shall know,
Plucking the *majingka* from the tree, I will cook and eat it.

[The word *ma°sa* has the same meaning as *ma chong* or motherhood. *Majingka* is the name of an edible creeper. The simile is that the man would like to carry off the girl as he would collect *majingka* leaves. The man refers to himself as *bipa*, lit. "the male."]

(5) As the parrots of the Bolong tree bite off the ears of rice,
So will this one take to himself thy breast.

[Here, the singer refers to himself as *chalang*.]

(6) Near to me do not come lest thy father, thy husband should blame us.
On my toes do not step lest we be falsely accused.

[Here, the love-sick swain has an eye to business, and thinks he had better be going.]

(7) With thy tears, dear one, fill a pot from Banjan.
With the *nahor* tree of Tura beat thy heart.

[Banjan is a corruption of the word bazaar. The girl is expected to weep at the idea of parting. She is to strike her heart with a piece of *nahor*, probably because it is a very hard wood.]

(8) The crow has flown away to Rajabala,
And I must follow him to bring thee white rice.

(9) Father, together let us die,
Or as one run away.

(10) Sina ōbakkōsan sinawa apaba,
Katarama dingsan katnawa dongaba.

Here the man interposes.

(11) Samĭl mĭlangakoma riknama amaba,
Ja°gam chosikōma sanmana dongaba.

Again the girl sings.

(12) Katé cha°na madétang sépang apané,
Kaésina tōbĭlbang kōkang ra jané.

The man takes up the refrain.

(13) Dō°dō gita bidaling amaba,
Ra°u gita pinaring dongaba.
(14) Sokmé kĭmkarong miting amasongba,
Japing gimbari bokgin dongasongba.
(15) Ku°chil mandal bibalĭn dongasongba,
Mikgil watré bijakin rajasongba.

(10) With the same strip of bark let us hang ourselves.
Or by one road together run away.

(11) Through the broken sesamum we shall be chased, my mother,
By our wet footprints we shall be tracked, my dear.

(12) If fleeing, thou leavest me with my stepmother, oh father,
By hanging myself to the cross beam of the house I will kill myself.

(13) Thou art beautiful as a young hen, my mother.
Or like a well-shaped gourd.
(14) Thy breast is small and beautiful, my mother,
Thy thigh is white as the *gimbari* tree, my dear.
(15) Thy lips are like the flower of the mandal tree, dear one.
Thine eyelids are like the leaves of the bamboo, my queen.

[The man here appears to have resorted to fulsome flattery, to make up for his ungallant conduct in leading the girl on, while determined to forsake her. It must be added that the whole song is not as tragic as it seems to be, for it is sung by many couples in the same place and at the same time.]

Dō°kua Arō Méséni Kata.

Achikranga dō°kuani bimungkō Inongméa Inding-panté, chongmōtan Inong-Jasrong Inding-Chipimrong mĭnga ĭna. Uara mésé baksa kni chitgrika ĭna. Skang dō°kuakō chitchengōa ukōdé méséa namédaké tarié chitaha ĭna. Uni gĭmĭn dō°kuadé da°ōna kĭngkĭng kimé namédaké gonggni gni cha°a ĭna. Indiba ja°manō mésékō chitskaōa chĭtna aratémung, rĭmchopchopé, ba reprepé donanga ĭna. Uni gĭmĭnsa méséni kiméa daōna kĭngkĭng gol getget dakaia ĭna. Arō méséba dō°kuani kimékō chiksotskana am°béaha ĭna. Indaké ong°ani gĭmĭnsa da°ōna kĭngkĭng biap damsanō tusina sĭkja ĭna; mikrak anti méséna kené gĭpĭn biapōna biljité tusironga ĭna.

The Story of the Bhimraj and the Rat.

The Garos call the bhimraj Inongméa-Inding-panté, or Inong-Jasrong-Inding-Chipimrong. Once upon a time, he and the rat used to comb each other's hair and feathers. The rat did his work very well. For this reason the bhimraj has to this day two beautiful feathers in his tail. But the bhimraj, after his own tail had been dressed by the rat, was lazy, and rolled the rat's tail between his hands and rubbed it. For this reason, the rat's tail is round and without any hair. The rat now wishes to bite off the tail of the bhimraj. For this reason, the bird will never sleep often in the same place, and at night flits to another perch every time it wakes up, for fear of the rat.

Duramung Songdumung Dakgrika.

Skangō Songducha ré°angé, Dura a°tang démé°chikna uni bimung Siméra, Songduni dépantékō Singrakō chawarina sing°jok. Uni gĭmĭn, Songduba "nang°ni mĭtchijaōdé rim°angbō" ĭné ma°gipa Songdu ku°ataha.

Duraba gritang Singrakō a°tang nokōna rĭm°baé démé°chikna Siméramung baksa dō°biknié ron°jok. Ja°manō Siméra ségipana dō°ō dō°rekgĭpukō song°ratchié ro°na; wak wakchang gipokkō song°kangkĭlé song°a. "Anga iakō cha°ja" ĭngipa Singra. Uni cha°jani gĭmĭn, jikgipa Siméra mé°a gitchi sĭké song°a; chambĭl bĭtchi rué ritana. Ukōba "pura rongmĭnkuja, riching gĭlmĭnkuja," ĭné cha°ja.

The Fight between the Brahmaputra and Tura Hill.

Once upon a time Tura mountain went to the Brahmaputra to ask for the latter's son Singra for his daughter Siméra. His mother, the Brahmaputra, said, "If you do not dislike him take him." So Tura took his nephew home with him, and married him to his daughter Siméra. Afterwards, Siméra cooked a capon for her husband without herbs or condiments; she also cooked a pig with white sides in the same manner. Singra said, "I will not eat this." Then Siméra added dried bamboo shoots and the seeds of a pumelo.

Then, because the flour was not quite cooked, and the ginger was underdone, he would not eat

Simérani mi arō sam song°ara Singrana sal sni wal sni ong°pĭlé song°ōba cha°ja ĭna.

Songduni dépanté Singra aganjok "a°song dongdika dongjawa, chija ringdika ringjawa" ĭné sal sni wal snina kĭngkĭng kalnĭm dongbōka. Unikōa okila amjaé Singraa rédura mĭk ritchasa ra°é a°tang kangkariō kachangé dongana.

Unikōsa okila amjaé ma°gĭpa Songduchi ré°angé "ama angadé mi okila amjajok, chi gitok ra°na amjajok" ĭné ma°gipana Songduna "angadé sal sni, arō wal snina kĭngkĭng mĭtchi arō se°engani gĭmĭn cha°ja." Uandaké ma°gipana aganaré a°tang°ni kangkarini rédurakō engémung baksa ma°gipani Songduni mikkangon Singraa gitelari sijok.

Unasa Durakō Songdu arō Singrani Jongipa Jangra namen ka°ōnangé dengrikna ĭné mikakō bakaha.

Mitékō bimung Nagnikō, katchikō Tengajukō ha°kō nal ratkan, patal singkan, pukan, Buga Radépakō na°nĭl Singsipakō bak kabara. Mĭkani bimung Noré-Chiré, miténi bimung Simbu-Ratcha Karu-nokma. Iadrang darangkon baju mong°ba°a. Unikōsa salaramchi dōé sal sni, wal snina kĭngkĭng mikakō bĭlaké wachengatana, dengrikna Dura abrikō chi bripna siō.

Duraa salkō arō balwakō grapé ōkamaha "Ō Salgira, ang°kōdé Songdu chi siripé, Songdu ba°na dōé, ang°kō sō°otna ameng°jok; Ō Balgira, bĭlaké balwa tarakbō, angna ka°saōdé; Ō Salgira raké teng°subō, ang°kō namnikōdé" ĭné, Durani jajrengé ōkamani gĭmĭn balwaba sal snina kĭngkĭng ta°raka, Salgiraba sal snina teng°sua. Uni gĭmĭn Dura a°brikō

the food. So for seven days and nights, though Siméra cooked rice and vegetables for him, he would not eat. Then Singra, the son of the Brahmaputra, said, "The country is not good, I will not stay; the water is not fit to drink, I will not drink," and for seven days and nights he fasted. Then being hungry, Singra wound a hundred cubits of cane round his waist.

As he was starving, he went to his mother, and said, "Mother, I am starving and for want of water my throat is dry; for seven days and nights I have not been able to eat owing to the bad smell of the food." Having said this, he undid the cane from round his waist and fell dead before his mother the Brahmaputra.

Then the Brahmaputra and Singra's brother Jangra were very angry, and in order to fight with Tura, they loosed the rain (*i.e.* so as to rise and reach the mountain).

And they prayed to the spirit whose name is Nangni, and also Tengaju, to wash away the earth and to pierce the rocks, and they made an alliance with the *buga* Radépa, and with the eel Singsipa. The name of the rain is Noré-Chiré and that of the spirit Simbu-Ratcha Karu-nokma. These all were called to their aid. Then rising in the east, they (the spirits) caused it to rain for seven days and seven nights, and tried to kill Tura mountain by flooding it.

Tura, weeping, prayed thus to the sun and wind: "Oh Salgira, the river is trying to flood and kill me; oh Balgira, blow strongly if thou lovest me; Oh Salgira, shine brightly if

chi bripna man°jajok arō chichol su°amna amjajok. Maina Songdumung Duramung dakgrikō gitok changgni abrikō chi su°sota ĭnchina changgni gitok daké chichol su°anga, salchok onchina ukōsa da°ōna kĭngkĭng manderang Dō°ma gitok ba Sōgun gitok ĭna.

thou likest me." Then for seven days the wind blew and the sun shone. For this reason, the Brahmaputra was not able to drown Tura mountain or to pierce its rocks with water channels. But in the fight between the Brahmaputra and the Tura mountain two gaps were pierced in the mountain by the water, which are now known as the Pass of the Cormorant and the Pass of the Vulture.

MATCHADUNI KATAKŌ MÉSŌKANI.

Skangō matchadu salōdé mandé daké A°chik songōna ré°baronga ĭna, indiba walōdé matcha pĭlé, matchu, dō°bokrangkō chĭké cha°ronga ĭna. Changsaō mélaé matchadua sal dok chelgĭpa ramaōnikō ré°angé, sak gitam ba sak bri A°chikkō uigija daké ku°sikchi chikkapé a°tangni nokni nokkimaō wak donram, wak nolō chipé, doné, sal bonga doné saksakō cha°a ĭna. Arō antisa jĭlé saksaba cha°a ĭna. Uandaké, sal sal mandé rĭm°é cha°ronga ĭna. Ukō niké Abeta namen ka°sachakbéjok, arō indaké chanchijok, "Da°mō angaba na°simangkō sō°otskagen" ĭné gisĭktangō chanchié a°tangni nokchina pĭl°angjok. Unikōsa Abeta namen sĭmĭlbégipa térikmalbĭkkō palna ĭné ōlangjok ĭna. Abetni matchaduni songōna sokarin, songgĭmĭk matchaduba Abet maikō ra°bara ĭné ré°batokjok. Unon Abet aganaha "Bitérangkō na°simangba cha°pana skama?" ĭné sing°aha. Unon matchadurangba "Nang°ni ra°-

THE STORY OF THE MATCHADUS.*

Once upon a time, the *Matchadus* used to come to the Garo villages, having in the daytime the shapes of men, but turning at night into tigers, and killing cattle and goats. They once collected together, and having gone a distance of six days' journey, they seized three or four Garos, carried them off in their mouths, and shut them up in a pig-sty under their house. Then after five days they ate one man, and after a week another. Thus they daily caught people and ate them. Seeing this, Abet was very grieved and thought to himself, "Let us see how I can kill them" (the *matchadus*). So Abet took some scented plantains for sale. On arrival at the *matchadu* village, all the inhabitants gathered together to see what Abet had to sell. Then Abet asked them, "Do you want any fruit to eat?" The *matchadus* asked, in reply, "Does the fruit you have brought grow on a vine or a tree?" Therefore Abet answered, "The tree which

* *Matchadus* are believed by the Garos to be evil spirits who have the power of assuming the shapes of men or tigers at will.

bara bitéa buduōnima, bibolōnima ?" ĭné sing°jok. Uni gĭmĭn Abetba aganaha "Iani bipangdé dal°dal béa." Ua bolba namen cheng béa" ĭné uamang jégrikmanō térik malbikkō song gĭmĭkna sualé on°aha. Ukō cha°on chi°a arō sĭmĭlani gĭmĭn namen namnikbéaha arō matchadurang aganaha. "Abet nang°ō indakgipa bité dogengpĭtima"? Unon Abet aganchakaha "Na°simang song gĭmĭk angni bolkō denpémitingō jakchi ra°chaktokbō, indaké dakōdé anga na°simangna namen bangbéa bitékō on°gen" ĭné aganaha. Ia katarangkō knaé aganjok "Chinga nang°ni biténa den°pémitingō pĭlakan jakchi ra°chaksōgen."

Unon Abeta bolchu dul mĭk chibonga ong°gĭpakō salsnina kĭngkĭng den°péé, salchetni salō pĭlak matchaduna aganaha. "Da°ōdé na°simang gĭmĭkan ré°baé ra°chaksōbō" ĭné ōkamaha. Uni gĭmĭn matchadurangba pĭlakan ré°baé bolni bé°angmitingō jakchi ra°chaktokaha. Bolchu bé°angmitingō songgĭmĭk matchadukō sō°ōta gĭta siangaha. Uandaké Abetni sō°ōtani gĭmĭn mandékō gitang ra°é ba wak nolō jĭlé cha°jaha.

produces this fruit is very big and tall." He then distributed the plantains that he had brought among the whole village. They ate them, and finding them sweet, the *matchadus* asked him, "Abet, have you got any more such fruits ?" Then Abet replied, "If all of you will come and hold up your hands when I cut it down, I will give you a great quantity of fruit." Hearing this they said, "We will all come and hold up our hands when you cut it down." Then Abet began to cut down a *simul* cotton tree which was fifteen cubits in circumference. He worked for seven days, and on the eighth he said to the *matchadus*, "Now, if you will all come you may have the fruit." So all the *matchadus* came to hold up their hands. When the cotton-tree fell it killed the whole village of *matchadus*, and thus Abet prevented them from ever again catching and eating men, or keeping them for eating in pig-stys.

Do°maskimung Chini Ang°kémung baksa Ripeng Kagrikani Kata.

Dō°maski skang aganjok chini ang°kékō "Na°ching sakgniba ripeng kagrikna" ĭnjok. Unon chini ang°kéba bébé ra°é "hai ripeng kagrikbō." Ripeng kagriké adita sal dongé, matchadu budépa makaré bé°enkō A°chik songōna palna ra°bachim. Unōa dō°maskiba matchadu budépani ja°manō jarikbajok. Dō°maski

Story of the Compact between the Wagtail and the Crab.

Once upon a time the wagtail said to the crab, "Let us be friends and allies." The crab approved of this proposal, and expressed his assent. Soon after they had made this contract, an old *matchadu* went to a Garo village to sell monkey's flesh. The wagtail followed the old *matchadu*, and whenever he tried to sell his wares, he called out,

(9) Anchi tokengba,
Kĭmĭl paengba.

(9) Also am sprinkling the blood,
Also am sticking the feathers.

[The singer describes how he has sprinkled the new house with the blood of the bird sacrificed, and made its feathers adhere to the posts, according to the usual custom.]

(10) Anga songdong panaka,
Anga a°cha panaka.

(10) I dwell in the village,
I cultivate land.

Abengni Anchara. Song sung at the break up of the Wangala Festivities.

(1) Asong Gōēratangna ré°najok amasong,
Chiga Kalkamétangna joknajok dongasong.

(1) To the country of Gōēra I am about to go, my mother;
To the country of Kalkamé I am about to travel, my dear.

[The man likens his home to the country of Gōēra and Kalkamé. The former is the god of strength, and the latter is his uncle.]

(2) Donga nisō°ongnajok amasongba,
Chami sengsō°ongnajok dongasongba.

(2) My wife will be watching for me, my mother;
Her family will be looking for me, dear.

[*Ama*, lit. "my mother," is used as a term of respect, and in the second line the word *dongasong* is best translated "my dear," though I doubt if any literal translation for the word could be found.]

(3) A°song ja°niratangna ré°najok amasong,
Chiga sirginchitangna joknajok dongasong.

(3) To my country my shadow is about to start, my mother;
To the fountain of my home it is about to reach.

(4) Na°ma jakō sĭknawa bipadé,
Mima ku°ō rĭm°nawa chalangdé.

(4) In my hand taking the flesh of the *na°ma* spitted (on a skewer),
In my mouth taking the mother of rice.

[The meaning of this verse is that the singer is going home after having had a good feast.

The *na°ma* is a fish which is constantly referred to in Garo songs and stories. The singer refers to himself in one place as *bipa*, lit. male, and in the other as *chalang*.]

(5) Mimakō midong potōba amasongba,
Na°makō rengsi sĭkōba dongasongba.

(5) With my hair stuck with ears of rice, my mother,
And with the flesh of the *na°ma* on a skewer, my dear.

[At the Wangala and other festivals, it is the custom for the dancers to stick feathers and bunches of rice in ear in their hair.]

(6) Minima jakō sĭké chakatna,
Rokimé skang dĭlé réchana.

(6) Holding the mother of rice in my hand,
And with Rokimé going before me.

[Rokimé is the spirit in whose care rice has been placed, so "mother of rice" in the first line and Rokimé in the second are synonymous.]

Here the girl replies.

(7) Angni senki bidingō mima midongdrangdé,
Chingni gana rikongō na°ma rengsidrangdé.

(7) The ears of rice are in the lines of beads of my *senki*,
On the fringe of my petticoat are the pieces of *na°ma's* flesh.

[The *senki* is the belt of white beads which Garo women often wear. The idea conveyed in this verse is that the man is not to think too much of his own importance, for the woman has had a share in the good things as well as he.]

(8) Kni tomō potnawa bimadé chingadé,
Jakpatangō ra°nawa mé°chikdé.

(8) In our hair knots, we, the females, will put them (ears of rice).
In our hands, we, the women, will take them (pieces of *na°ma's* flesh).

(9) Sĭnkira kikuna mima midongadrangkō bima anga,

(9) In the *sĭnkira* hanging down in front, I, the female, will put the mother of rice,

Jakpachelō ra°kuna na°marengsidrangkō mé°chik chinga.

In the palms of our hands we, the women, will hide the *na°ma's* flesh.

[The *sinkira* is a small basket into which, at harvest time, the best grains are put to be kept for seed. I have translated *jakpachel* as "palm of the hand," literally it means the hand half closed and filled.]

(10) Misi gita grongna apakō bimadé,
Saljong gita namsanga dongakō bima nangkō.

(10) To this female thou art as a god to meet, my father,
To her thou art like the spirit Saljong (the sun).

[The girl thinks she has been unkind, and must say something to cheer him.]

(11) Songtang, noktang ĭnōdé apakō nangkō,

Jal°ĭk gĭtang ĭnōdé dongakō bima nangkō.

(11) Hearing thee speak of thine own village and house, my father,
I thought of thee as a green chilli.

[Here "green chilli" is a synonym for bachelor.]

(12) Jaksi rim°dingding ang°a apakō bimadé,

Gisĭk ku°mangchi ang°a dongakō mé°chikdé.

(12) Holding thy finger, a little way this female will go, my father,
This woman will whisper with thee, my dear.

[Here the girl turns forgiving and kind again, and says that though she cannot go home with him she will walk a little way.]

The man again sings.

(13) Jakcha jakjĭparina amasongkō,
Mĭkcha mikémarina dongasongkō.

(13) With my hand I will beckon to thee, my mother,
And with my eye I will make thee a sign.

Munini Kata.

Munikō ba°gipakō Nōarani-Nōgnini mĭnga. Uni ba°gipara mĭkang-banda jasichua. A°song-Pékgitok Chiga-Garengwalō gé°-aha ĭna. Ukō man°ani chol ian. Anti Wakmétongōna ré°-engba, ramadilō am°bolkō am°na ré°angé, ja°chi ga°dikdikmanōara

Story of the Muni Plant.

The muni plant was born of one Nōarani-Nōgnini. Its mother had an ugly face and crooked toes. It was planted in the country of Pégitok and by the waters of Garengwal. It was found in this way. A certain one going to market at Wakmétong

ukō nikaha. Niké ukō ra°baha, unikōa ukō ra°on tusidimua ĭna. Unasa muni ĭné chanchié ra°baha. Uni gĭmĭn uamangko té°rik bariō gé°ōa tusidimua ĭna. Ukō man°-chengĭpa Niba-Jonja mĭnga ĭna. Un ja°manō Salgraba Niba-Jonjani jikkō sekna ré°bajok. Uni gĭmĭn Niba-Jonja mĭ°lam, tonual ra°é, sĭpi-kangsari dé°é, Ro°ong-dōgachol, Saljong-Patraō den°a ĭné tĭmsōachim. Salgrani ré°baōa brian gipĭkba°a, Rong°-man romtomba°a ĭna. Una ke-némung, Niba-Jonjaba kratchaé jaksi chiké katpĭljok ĭna. Katpĭ-lon ramadilō Katchi-Briarikō, Misi-Susĭmékō grongaha ĭna. Uasa Niba-Jonjana skiatjok ĭna "Nang°ni té°rik bariō gé°akō Saljong-Patraō, Ro°ong-dōgachol gé°sōbō. Unon Salgradé tusi-dimugĭnok ki°sang chĭmĭtgĭnok." Uni skiagita Niba-Jonjani mu-nikō gé°sōjok ĭna. Salgra ré°-baōa mĭkĭl ŋom°jok, tusinapjok, brian jasengjajok, rikéan janikja-jok, mibian nikjajok, michachéan taljajok. Unon Grimchi-Barchi Silakki-Dokdokki saiwatjok, ga-napatjok ĭna. Unikōa Susiméan pĭlé Niba-Jonjakō mol°moltaijok ĭna "Bekmasan ringpĭlbō, isalsan chĭtrimbō, chitésan ringrimbō, mipalsan cha°rĭmbō, ĭné skiaha." Unon gitok chĭké, dika repé, Salgramung Niba-Jonjamung grō namjok nang°rimpĭljok ĭna. Bri-ba jasengpĭljok, rikéba ja°nik-pĭljok, mibima nikaha, micha-chéba talaha ĭna.

sought for firewood on the way, and struck it (the plant) with his foot. He took it and became sleepy. Then he knew it to be the *muni* plant, and planted it in his plantain garden. The man who first found it was named Niba-Jonja. Afterwards, Salgra (spirit of the sun) came to carry off Niba-Jonja's wife. Therefore Niba-Jonja took his sword and shield and lay in wait to kill him at the Gate of the Rocks or the Way of Saljong. When Salgra came, the mountain rocked and the stones rolled down. Being afraid of him, Niba-Jonja bit his fingers in shame and ran away. As he ran, he met the spirit Briari, or Susimé, who said to Niba-Jonja, "Take that which is planted in thy plantain garden, and plant it in the Way of Saljong, in the Gate of the Rocks; then Salgra will be sleepy and his back will be weak." Niba Jonja planted the *muni* as he had been taught, and Salgra's eyelids became heavy and he slept. Then the hills ceased to be light, the shadows were not seen, the rice was not visible, and the husks could not be distinguished (from the rice). Then Grimchi-Barchi Silakki-Dokdokki (the wife of Niba-Jonja) was angry and uttered curses. Then Susimé implored Niba-Jonja, saying, "Drink of one cup, eat from the same plantain leaf, drink the same water, eat the same rice." So having grasped each other's wrists and bitten the same piece of grass, Salgra and Niba-Jonja made friends,* and the hills were again bright, the high places had shadows, rice could be seen and the husks could be distinguished.

* See the chapter on Decision of Disputes for the forms of reconciliation.

Kan°churini Kata.

Kan°churikō gĭpĭn bimungchi mĭngadé Pongrengméa-Pongsengpanté, Drongméa-Chandongpanté, Mikang-Chijĭm-Kasot-Tĭngrĭng mĭngachĭm. Ua kan°churia gandōména, ganjaksĭlna mangsongé, misini sagré, Saljongni dépantérangkō rama baksōchina, jangrang ka°sōchina, walmenchié, waldukaé, manchié dikaé "unsalō anga ré°bagen" ĭné gé°eté donangachĭm. Indiba Pongrenga-Pongsenga bakbak gana sĭkémung a°tangni salmanchia sokgija ré°baōa, Misini, Saljongni rama baka, jang°rang ka°a man°kujamitingō ré°baé, a°kō chōa bolkō pé°ani Drongméa-Chandongpantékō, subibak engtongtang man°a ĭna.

Untaltalsa da°ōna kĭngkĭng a°kō chō°mitingō pangnan kan°churikō sutong dentong man°enga ĭna.

Uni gĭmĭn mandérangkōba gannasimitingō gana skelgĭpakōdé kan°churini gana gita jasa, changé changé, ba jajrenga ong°jaksa chusokjanaba donga, asi namja maina gana skela ĭné bengronga.

The Story of the Earth-worm.

Other names for the earth-worm are Pongrengméa-Pongsengpanté, Drongméa-Chandongpanté, and Mikang-Chijim-Kasot-Tingring. The earth-worm determined to assume the *jaksils* (rings worn by *nokmas*) and to go through the *gana* ceremony. So he ordered the messengers of the gods, that is, the sons of Saljong, to prepare a path and to make bridges for him, saying that on a certain day he would appear. But Pongreng-Pongseng thought to assume the rings before the appointed day, so he started before Saljong's servants had finished the path or had made the bridges, and as he came unseen, and they were still digging, he accidentally received a blow and was killed.

From that time to the present day, whenever earth is being dug, worms are constantly being killed.

For this reason also the assuming of the rings must take place on the date fixed upon, and the ceremony must not be performed a day sooner or later, for fear of pains in the legs or arms and other misfortunes.

SECTION VI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

TEKNONYMY.

TEKNONYMY, the custom according to which a parent takes the name of his or her child, with an affix meaning father or mother, is general among the Garos.

Among those with whom he is well acquainted, a man is not usually called by his own name if he is the father of a child. For instance, a man named Jasin, if he had a daughter named Nemji, would not be addressed as Jasin by those who were intimate with him, but as Nemjipa, or the father of Nemji. Similarly, Jasin's wife would not be called by her own name, but would be known as Nemjima, or the mother of Nemji. Should there be only one child, and should that child die, the parents would be known for a time as Mémangpa and Mémangma, the father and mother of a ghost.

The head of a village is looked upon as the father of the community, and is spoken of as *padot*, and his wife as *madot*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

There are some places in the Garo Hills which the Garos either fear or hold in reverence. Such are:

(1) Anangwari, a pool on the Ildek river. It is surrounded by high cliffs, and is supposed to be the abode of all manner of evil spirits, snakes, and large eels.

(2) Métongbol, a hill in the north of the district, not very far from Damra. It is said to be the place where Abong Nōga Raja used to keep the straw for his cattle.

(3) Jajong Kadram, a hill near Konkol village. The fable regarding it is that if a very long ladder were erected on this hill the moon might be reached. The meaning of the name is "the place of binding of the moon."

(4) Misi-kok-dok, or "the six baskets of millet," a big rock on the top of a hill not far from Songsak. It is used for the Salaksō°a ceremony or burning for sunshine. The tradition about it is that a single line of millet planted around the rock will yield a crop which will fill six *koks* or baskets.

(5) Chikmang, a hill in the south-east of the district. It is supposed to be the place to which the spirits of the dead go, to reside for a certain period before reincarnation.

(6) Dō°bakkol, or "the bats' cave," a big cave near Siju on the Someswari river. As its name implies, it is the home of myriads of bats. It is supposed to be the abode of spirits, and until late years no Garo would willingly enter it. Nobody has yet ascertained how far the cave extends, but the Garos believe that it has another exit near Tura. A stream issues from the cave and is plentifully stocked with fish, but the Garos will not eat them owing to their fear of the cave.

(7) Chi-dĭmak, or "the ink pool," a small pool of water on the top of Balpakram plateau. The belief regarding it is that all the spirts of the dead halt by it to eat their midday meal when on their way to Chikmang.

(8) Mabĭt, a big rock on the Balpakram plateau which is said to be the abode of Rokimé, the "mother of rice." It is believed that the goddess lets it be known in what direction she proposes to bestow her bounties, by means of a fine sand or dust which accumulates at the foot of the rock. If the sand is found to the north of the rock, the crop will be a good one for the inhabitants of the northern hills, and if to the south, the plain dwellers will be favoured. If the sand is found to the east, the Atongs will have a fine harvest, and if to the west, then the Abengs will have plenty of food.

(9) Another object of interest on Balpakram is what is known as *Dikkini ring*, or "the boat of Dikki." Dikki is one of the Garo deities, and his "boat" is a large rock which undoubtedly has the appearance of an upturned boat. The local tale is that Dikki wanted a boat in which to voyage down the Mahadeo



TWO WOMEN OF RAJASIMILA VILLAGE, PLAINS' GAROS.

stream, which takes its rise near Balpakram. He set to work to make it one night and laboured hard to have it finished before dawn, but the task was too great, and at cock-crow he had to leave his boat half made and make his escape back to spirit land.

(10) Kōasi, the name of a peak in the north-east of the hills not far from the Kamrup border. On the top of the hill there exists a large rock which is supposed to resemble a house in shape, and is thought to be the home of the spirits.

SECTION VII.

LANGUAGE.

For the following brief description of the Garo language, I am indebted to the Rev. E. G. Phillips, of the American Baptist Mission in Tura, who kindly placed at my disposal his "Outline Grammar of the Garo Language." For more detailed information I would refer the reader to the above work itself.

The Article.—This is entirely wanting in the Garo language.

The Noun.—*Gender.* Nouns denoting inanimate objects have no distinction of gender. In the case of animate beings, gender is expressed either by different words or by the addition of the affixes *bipa*, male, and *bima*, female, to the primary form of the noun.

The following are a few examples:—

Mé°asa, man . . .	*Mé°chik*, woman.
Achu, grandfather . .	*Ambi*, grandmother.
Matchubipa, bull . . .	*Matchubima*, cow.
Dō°bipa, cock . . .	*Dō°bima*, hen.

Number.—The plural number is formed by the addition of the affixes *rang*, *drang*, *mang* or *madang* to the singular.

When numeral adjectives accompany the noun, the plural ending is omitted, as *mandé sakbri*, four men. When other adjectives accompany the noun, or when two or more nouns are in conjunction, the last word only takes the plural ending, as *dal'a matchurang*, large cattle; *dō°bok arō matchurang*, the goats and the cattle.

Cases.—The declension is the same for nouns and pronouns and is perfectly regular.

	Singular.	Plural.
Nom.	*Matchu*, an ox.	*Matchurang*, oxen.
Pos.	*Matchuni*, of an ox.	*Matchurangni*, of oxen.
Dat.	*Matchuna*, to or for an ox.	*Matchurangna*, to or for oxen.
Obj.	*Matchukō*, an ox.	*Matchurangkō*, oxen.
Inst.	*Matchuchi*, by an ox.	*Matchurangchi*, by oxen.
Abl.	*Matchuōni*, or *-ōnikō*, from an ox.	*Matchurangōni*, or, *-ōnikō*, from oxen.
Loc.	*Matchuō*, *-ōna*, *-chi*, in, into, or unto an ox.	*Matchurangō*, *-ōna*, *-chi*, -in, into, or unto oxen.

Adjectives.—Adjectives may either precede or follow the nouns which they qualify. If they precede the noun, they take no case or plural endings. If one or more follow the noun, the ending is placed on the last adjective and not on the noun.

Comparison.—The comparative degree is denoted by affixing the word *baté*, than, to the dative case of the word with which comparison is made, and adding the word *bata*, more, to the adjective.

Matchuna baté mongma dal°bata.—Than a cow an elephant is larger.

The superlative degree is expressed by putting the word *pĭlak*, all, before the noun with which comparison is made, which again is in the dative case.

Pĭlak matburungna baté mongma dal°bata.—Than all animals the elephant is larger.

Numerals.—In Garo the cardinal numbers always follow the nouns. The numerals up to ten are as follows:—

1. *sa.*	6. *dok.*
2. *gni.*	7. *sni.*
3. *gitam.*	8. *chet.*
4. *bri.*	9. *sku.*
5. *bonga.*	10. *chikung.*

From eleven to nineteen the numbers are formed by adding the above words to the first syllable of the word for ten, as *chisa*, eleven, *chigni*, twelve. The remaining numerals up to one hundred are multiples of ten.

The ordinals are formed by adding the ending *gipa* to the cardinal numbers.

Numeral Prefixes.—In using numerals, certain particles are always prefixed to them to classify the objects referred to; as

mandé sakbri, four men; *dō°ō mang bonga*, five birds; *tangka gong chet*, eight rupees.

Words expressing time are followed by the simple numeral, as *sal bri*, four days.

Pronouns.—The personal pronouns are the following:—

Personal Pronouns—

SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Anga, I.	*Chinga*, *An°ching* } we.
Na°a, thou, you.	*Na°simang*, you.
Ua, he.	*Uamang*, *Uarang* } they.

Reflexive.—The reflexive pronoun is:—

Singular.—*A°tangan* myself, yourself, himself, herself or itself.

Plural.—*A°tangtangan*, ourselves, yourselves, *A°tangmang*, themselves.

Interrogative Pronouns.—The Interrogative Pronouns are as follows:—

SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Sa or *Sawa*, who?	*Sarang*, who?
Mai, what?	*Mairang*, what?
Badia, which?	*Badiarang*, which?

Relative Pronouns.—There is no relative pronoun in Garo, but one has been borrowed from Bengali, *jé*, which, and its plural *jérang*.

Adjective Pronouns.—these are of two kinds.

(1) *Demonstrative Pronouns*—

SINGULAR.	PLURAL.
Ia, this.	*Iarang*, *iamang*, *iadrang*, these.
Ua, that.	*Uarang*, *uamang*, *uamadang*, *uadrang*, those.

(2) *The Indefinite Pronouns.*—The indefinite pronouns are numerous. The following are a few of the common ones.

Saōba, someone.	*Gĭpĭn*, another.
Maiba, something.	*Indita*, so much.
On°tisa, a little.	*Aski*, a certain one.
Bang°a, much.	*Pĭlakan*, all.

Verbs.—Verbs are conjugated quite regularly, and there is but one conjugation for all verbs. I do not propose to give examples of the conjugation, which can be better studied in Mr. Phillips' grammar, but I shall merely call attention to those portions of the verb which deserve particular notice.

In the Indicative Mood the past tense has three endings, *aha*, *jok*, and *chim*. The first indicates an indefinite past, the second an immediate past, and the third a remote past. There are two forms of the future tense, the Simple Future ending in *gen*, and the Immediate Future ending in *nasia*, *gĭnok*, and *gni*, which give the idea of an action to follow at once, or on the point of being completed.

In the Imperative Mood the second person singular or plural is formed by the addition of the particle *bō*, and the third person singular or plural by that of *china* or *chong* to the root of the verb. The interrogative *ma* may be added to the Imperative, as *Anga ua mandékō ōkambōma?* (Do you say to me) call that man? The particle *né* is added to the second person Imperative, and has the force of "please," as *ré°angbōnē*, please go away. *Da* added to the same form intensifies the command, as *ré°angbóda*, go, I say.

The simple form of the Infinitive Mood ends in *na*, as *dokna*, to strike. There are, however, two other endings, *china* and *kandé*, which give an added idea of purpose. For example, *angkō gisĭk ra°kandé iakō dakbō*, do this to remember me, and *anga kam kachina ré°baha*, I came to work.

The Infinitive is sometimes used as a sort of first person Imperative, as *anga dokna*, let me strike. The past tense endings *aha* and *jok* are sometimes added to the Infinitive to denote purpose, as *anga doknaha*, I have a mind to strike.

Verbal Nouns.—There are three endings for verbal nouns, as *dokani*, the striking; *dokgipa*, the striker; and *dokgimin*, that which has been struck. These may also be used as adjectives, as *dokani biap*, the place of striking.

Negative verbs are formed by the addition of the particle *ja* between the root and the tense ending.

Causal verbs are formed by inserting the particle *at* between the root and the tense ending.

Neuter Verbs.—There are three forms of the verb "to be,"

on°ga, *donga*, and *gnang*. It is somewhat difficult to define the distinction between these, for they may to some extent be used interchangeably. *On°ga* expresses existence as a result, *donga* existence with reference to locality, and also has the meaning of "to have," and *gnang* mere existence. They are never used as auxiliary verbs.

Compound Verbs.—These are very often used, the stems of two verbs being united, as *salkringna*, to tighten by drawing, which is composed of the roots of the verbs *salna*, to draw, and *kringna*, to make taut.

A curious characteristic of the Garo language is the manner in which nouns and adjectives may be conjugated as verbs, and verbs used as nouns and adjectives. He was in the field, would be translated *ua a°baŏchim;* the word *a°baŏ* being the dative case of *a°ba*, a field, and *chim* the ending of the past tense of the Indicative Mood.

Adverbs.—There are a number of adverbs of time, of place, and of manner, which have nothing about them worthy of special notice. Besides these, there exist a great many adverbial particles which are inserted between the stems and endings of verbs and adjectives, and are also used as affixes, which modify the meaning of such words. Some of these are themselves verbal stems, and the verbs modified by them might perhaps be better called compound verbs. It frequently happens that more than one of these particles are inserted between the root of the verb and its ending, for instance, *uamang rĕ°bapĭltokaha*, they all came back again. Here the verbal root is *ré*, from *rĕ°na*, to go, and the particles *ba*, which implies a movement towards the speaker, *pĭl*, again, and *tok*, all, have been inserted between the root and the tense ending *aha*.

Prepositions.—In Garo the case endings to a great extent take the place of prepositions. Those that do exist would be more correctly called postpositions, for they are placed after the nouns they refer to.

Syntax.—The natural position in the sentence of the principal parts are (1) subject, (2) object, and (3) verb. The first and second may be transposed for emphasis, but the verb always comes last.

APPENDIX A

NAMES OF SOME OF THE SUBDIVISIONS OF THE GARO EXOGAMOUS SEPTS.

Momin.	Marak.	Sangma.
Adokgré	Adokgré	Adima
Baringgré	A°jong	Agitok Koksep
Basugré	Areng	Ampang
Bol	Awi	Bambomcheng
Cheran	Banjol	Bangbonggré
Chōtolja	Bolong	Boldakgré
Dalbot	Bolwari Amak	Bolsal
Darugré	Bolwari Déwajong	Cheran
Dō°gring	Chada	Chikal
Dō°kongsi	Chambugong	Chisik
Ebang	Chicham	Daju
Gabīl Chigisil	Chisim	Dalbot
Gabīl Dabit	Dadok	Dambu
Gabīl Tébil	Dangō	Dandagīl
Gabīl Wacheksi	Déō	Dangō
Gandīm	Dokgré	Dangsu
Goldé	Doljel	Darat
Jakgitchet	Dō°pō	Daratang
Jongsugré	Ganching	Daua
Konchikol	Gara	Dibra
Matchokgré	Jengcham	Dilsi
Mrenda	Kagra	Dō°bakkol
Naringré Kitong	Kaji	Domba
Nongmilong	Kama	Gabīl
Nongsōbal	Kōbi	Gara
Rimsu	Koknal	Gineng
Wari	Kongkal	Gori
	Maji	Hatui
	Mangki	Jalwagré
	Méjenga	Jambat
	Mrong Danīl	Koknal
	Mrong Gisīm	Koksi
	Napak	Sīnal
	Nengsot	Manda
	Nokrek	Mangsang Rangmé
	Pantō	Mankin
	Pattang	Mécheng
	Pira	Mégonggiri
	Raichil	Méjolgré Chekbra
	Raksam	Nengkugré
	Rangsa Dō°sīk	Nengminja

Momin.	Marak.	Sangma.
	Rangsa Gīpi	Nengwa
	Rangsa Gitchak	Nongchram
	Réking	Réma
	Rima	Richil
	Rongara	Rongbingré
	Rongdik	Rongara
	Rongma	Rongchol
	Rongmutu	Rongkuak
	Ruam	Rongrokgré
	Singtang	Sikkō
	Takkni	Simsang
	Tébé Asimgré	Sīnal
	Tuju	Songsugré
		Tébonggré
		Tigiti
		Wa°sra

Note.—In some cases it will be found that the same names appear under different heads; in such cases the subdivisions belong to both the exogamous septs under which they have been shown.

APPENDIX B.

COMPARATIVE GRAMMAR OF THE KACHARI AND GARO LANGUAGES.

The following comparative grammar and vocabulary are intended to illustrate the close resemblance which exists between the Kachari and Garo languages. In the chapter on origin I have pointed out the near relationship between the two tribes in other respects, and shown that while the Kacharis have yielded to the influence of foreigners, the Garos have remained to a great degree unaffected and have retained their tongue and manners. For this reason, I am inclined to think that the Garo language should be considered to represent the primitive form of the Bodo tongue, and not Kachari.

The Kachari portion of this grammar has been borrowed from the late Rev. S. Endle's "Outline Grammar of the Kachari Language," and in order to enable the reader to pronounce the words, I have also borrowed the following diacritical marks. For the pronunciation of the Garo words, the reader is referred to the diacritical marks in the preface.

a . .	unaccented, always short, as in "comp*a*ny."
á . .	long, as in "f*a*ther."
à . .	sharp, as in "p*a*n."
å . .	broad sound, as in "c*a*ll."
e . .	unaccented, as in "bed."
ê . .	as in "they"
è . .	an intermediate sound between the two former.
i . .	unmarked, short, as in "p*i*n."
í . .	long, as in "mar*i*ne."
o . .	unmarked, short, as in "stop."
ô . .	long, as in "bone."
u . .	short, as in "p*u*ll."
ú . .	long, as in "pool."
ŭ . .	resembles *a*, but is more compressed.
au . .	as "*ow*" in "h*ow*."
aú . .	approximates to ô.

ai . .	as *i* in "w*i*ne."
ŭí . .	the sound fluctuates between oi (pronounced very short) and í.
oi . .	as *oi* in "b*oi*l."

Declension.—The declension of nouns in the two languages is very similar, the case endings being the following:—

	KACHARI.	GARO.
Nom. . .		
Obj. . .	khô . .	kō.
Inst. . .	zang . .	chi.
Dat. . .	nŭ . .	na.
Abl. . .	ni-frai . .	ōni, ōnikō.
Poss. . .	ni . .	ni.
Loc. . .	áu . .	ō.

Adjectives.—In Kachari, as in Garo, the adjectives are placed sometimes before and sometimes after the nouns they qualify. A special point of resemblance in this respect is that in the latter event, the case or plural ending is placed on the adjective and not on the noun. "I saw a good man," would be in Kachari *áng mànsŭí găhàmkhô nubai*, and in Garo *anga mandé namakō nikaha.* The comparison of adjectives is formed in both languages in a similar manner, the comparative degree being denoted by affixing the word *sári* or *khri* in Kachari, and *baté* in Garo (equivalent to our "than"), to the word with which comparison is made, the latter being at the same time in the dative case. In Kachari, the syllable *sin*, and in Garo, *zaú-sin bata,* "more," then follows the adjective, as (K) *bí ángnŭ-khri zaú-sin,* and (G) *ua angna baté dal°bata,* he than me more tall (is).

The superlative degree is expressed in much the same manner, the noun (always in the dative case) being in both languages preceded by some word signifying "all," as (K) *boi nŭ-sári bí găzaú-sin* and (G) *pĭlakna baté ua dal°bata,* than all he more tall (is).

Numeral Adjectives.—As will be seen in the comparative vocabulary, the numerals up to ten are almost identically the same in Kachari and in Garo. Above that number the languages differ; in Kachari figures being expressed by groups of four (*zakhai*) multiplied by another numeral, and in Garo by words to express multiples of ten. In both languages there also exists a number of prefixes which serve to classify the

objects referred to, and in some instances these are the same both in Kachari and Garo. For example, *sá* is used in Kachari for human beings, and *sak* in Garo; *má* for animals in Kachari, and *mang* in Garo. Three men would thus be *mànsŭí sà-thàm* in the former language, and *mandé sak-gitam* in the latter; four goats, would be *burmá má-brè* in Kachari, and *dō°bok mang-bri* in Garo.

Pronouns.—Personal pronouns. In the first and second person singular the pronouns (K) *áng*, I, and *nang*, thou, are the same as *anga* and *nanga* of the standard (Awé) Garo dialect, and the third person singular *bí* in Kachari is the same as *bia* in the Abeng dialect.

Possession in both Kachari and Garo is denoted by using the personal pronoun in the possessive case, as (K) *bê ángni burmá*, and (G) *ia angni dō°bok*, this is my goat.

Interrogative Pronouns.—The interrogative pronouns *sur* or *sar*, who? *má*, what? and *bůbe*, which? in Kachari, are in Garo *sa? mai?* and *badia?* In both languages they are declined like personal pronouns.

Adjective Pronouns.—There is little resemblance between the adjective pronouns in Kachari and Garo except in the following cases: (K) *gubun*, (G) *gipin*, other; (K) *surbá*, (G) *saōba*, somebody, and (K) *surbá surbá*, (G) *saōba saōba*, some persons.

Verbs.—In the conjugation of verbs there are many points of similarity between Kachari and Garo, of which the following are the most important.

In the Indicative Mood the nearest resemblance is in the simple future, of which the affix to the verbal stem is *gan* in Kachari and *gen* in Garo. There is another form of the future tense, which Mr. Endle in his grammar has named Paulo-post future, that has its counterpart in the Garo language. The ending of this tense in Kachari is *si-gan* or *nu-sui*, and in Garo it is formed by the addition of *nasigen* or *gĭnok* to the verbal root. Examples of this form of the verb are (K) *nu-sigan* or *nu-nŭ-sŭí* and (G) *niknasigen*, will see (almost at once) or on the point of seeing.

The endings of the Infinitive Mood *nŭ* in Kachari and *na* in Garo are very much alike. In both languages a negative

sense is given by means of an affix to the root of the verb. This affix is *a* in Kachari and *ja* in Garo. The Imperative Mood of a negative verb is, however, differently formed, by prefixing the syllable *da* to the verbal root in both languages, as (K) *dá-bu* and (G) *da°dok*, do not strike.

Another peculiar similarity between these two languages is the method which exists in both of combining verbs with verbs, or verbal endings with nouns and adjectives. In the former case the roots of two verbs are combined, and in the latter the nouns and adjectives are conjugated as if they were verbs. For instance (K) *phungan* and (G) *pringen*, it will (be) morning, are the words *phung* and *pring*, morning, combined with the ending of the future tense *gan* and *gen*. Both in Kachari and Garo there exists the custom of strengthening the meaning of a verbal root by attaching a distinct syllable to it, which remains between the root and the tense ending throughout the conjugation, as (K) *mai há-khàng-bai* and (G) *mikō-ra°tok-aha*, he has finished cutting his rice. In this example, the syllables (K) *khang* and (G) *tok* give the idea of "all" or "the whole." Of such syllables there are many in both languages.

Auxiliary Verbs.—In the verb "to be" there is a great deal of similarity between the two languages. (K) *Danga* and *dangman*, "is" and "was" are in Garo *donga* and *dongaha*. The negative form "is not" is *gŭíá* in Kachari and *gri* in Garo. Existence and possession may in both languages be denoted by the word *gnang*, as (K) *bê thàkhá gnang* and (G) *unō tanka gnang*, he has money. The interrogative particle (K) *na* and (G) *ma* is in both languages placed at the end of the sentence.

The foregoing is a fairly complete statement of the more remarkable points of resemblance between Kachari and Garo. There are others of less importance, but those to which I have drawn attention cover a wide field, and show that it is not in a few, but in nearly every division of grammar that the likeness exists.

In syntax, as in accidence, the close comparison may be continued, and it will be seen that in every particular Garo conforms with the rules of the sister language.

English.	Kachari.	Garo.
One	sè	sa
Two	nè, gnè	gni
Three	thàm	gitam
Four	brŭí or brè	bri
Five	bá	bonga
Six	då, rå	dok
Seven	sni	sni
Eight	zàt	chet
Nine	skhô, sikhô	sku
Ten	zi,	chi
I	áng	anga
Of me	ángni	angni
Thou	nang	na°a
Of thee	nangni	nangni
He	bí	ua, bia
You	nangsur	na°simang
Who?	sar, sur	sa
Where?	ba°beh°a	ba°ō
How many?	bèsè	baisik
What?	má	mai, ma
Why?	mána	maina
Hand	ákhai	jak
Foot	átheng	ja, jatheng
Skin	bigúr	bigĭl
Nose	ganthang	gĭntĭng
Mouth	khúgá	ku, ku°sik
Eye	mègan	mikron
Hair	khenai	kni
Man	mànsui	mé°asa, mandé
Father	fá	pa°a
My father	áfá	apa
Mother	má	ma°a
My brother	ádá	adatang
Child	fisá	bisa
Bamboo	óá	wa
Bamboo tube	hásung	wasing
Mustard seed	besor	bésual
Leaf	bilai	bijak
Rice (uncooked)	mai	mi
Rice (cooked)	mikham	mirong
Oil	tháu	tō
Fat	mezem	mĭtĭm
Wine	zaú	chu
Tiger	mosá	matcha
Cow	mosaú	matchu
Fish	ná, gná	na, na°tok
Rain	nakhá	mĭka
Matting	ēm	am
River	dŭímá	chibima
Rivulet	dŭísá	chiring
House	nŭ	nok
Door	dor	dōga
Thief	sikhàú	chaugipa
Female (of animals)	bímá	bima
Cold	găzáng	kasĭna

ENGLISH.	KACHARI.	GARO.
Much	gabáng	bang°a
Another	gúbún	gĭpĭn
Something	mábá	maiba
Water	dŭí, di	chi
Waste land	hágrá	a°jiri
To cut	dánŭ	dena
To place	din-hŭnŭ	dona
To tread upon	gánŭ	gadapna
To weep	gábnŭ	grapna
To put on clothes	gàn-nŭ	ganna
To fear	ginŭ	kena
To plough	hálolоinŭ	hal wéna
To run	khàtnŭ	katna
To run away	khàt-láng-nŭ	katangna
To hear	khná-nŭ	knana
To bring	lá-nŭ	ra°bana
To find	man-nŭ	man°na
To look	nai-nŭ	nina
To see	nu-nŭ	nikna

APPENDIX C.

ARMS AND IMPLEMENTS.

1. *Gĭtchi*, a hoe.
2. *Até*, a chopper.
3. *Jakengbrak*, a rake made of bamboo.
4. *Selu*, a spear.
5 and 6. *Mĭl°am*, swords.
7. *Sepi bolkĭng*, a shield made of wood.
8. *Rua*, an axe.
9. *Sepi*, a shield made of strips of bamboo.
10 and 11. *Rangs*, two gongs.

APPENDIX D.

ORNAMENTS.

1. *Bara-kancha*, Garo cloth.
2. *Gana - ripok*, ornamented woman's cloth.
3. *Kadĕsĭl*, man's head ornament.
4. *Senki*, girdle or waist-band, worn by women.
5. *Kadĕsĭl*, head-dress worn by women.
6. *Dō°katchi*, necklace worn by men or women.
7. *Nadirong*, worn by men and women in the upper part of the ear.
8. *Jaksil*, bracelet worn by men above the elbow.
9. *Santok*, old fashioned *jaksil*.
10. Another kind of *jaksil*.
11. *Shisha* or *Ōtonga*, women's ear-rings.
12. Another *Senki*.
13. Another *kadĕsĭl*.
14. *Rikchi-riting*, another kind of necklace.
15. *Rikmachu*, another necklace.
16. *Natapsi*, worn by women in upper part of the ear.
17. *Sengsang*, necklace worn by women, made of rows of small bells.
18. *Jakchap*, bangles worn on wrist by both sexes.
19. Bracelet worn by women.
20. Another set of *ōtonga*.

APPENDIX E.

COMPARATIVE VOCABULARY OF THIBETAN AND GARO WORDS.

English.	Thibetan.	Garo.
Arm	lak-pa	jakpong
Bank (river)	dram	dram
Boar	phak-pa	wak-bipa
Die, *v.*	shi-wa	sia
Dig	ko-wa	chō°a
Dog	khyi	achak, but kai, in Atong
Earth	sa	a°a, or ha
Eat	sa-wa	cha°a
Eye	mik	mīkron
Eye-brow	mik-si	mīkskim
Father	apha	apa, pa°a
Fifteen	che-nga	chibonga
Fifth	nga-pa	bonggipa
Fish	nya	na, or natok
Five	nga	bonga
Head	go	skō
Hill	ri	a°bri
I	nga	anga
In	nang-la	ningō
Little	chhung-chhung	chona
Lord	pompo	pamong
Man	mi	mé°asa
Me	nga-la	angkō
Mine	nge	angnin
Mother	a-ma	ma°a, ama
Mouth	kha	ku, ku°sik
Name	ming	bimung, but to name, mīnga
Nine	gu	sku
Nineteen	chu-gu	chisku
Nose	na-khu	gingting, but *nakung* in Atong
Otter	hram	matram
Pipe (tobacco)	kang-sa	kasrang
Pour	luk-pa	rua
Road	lam-ka	rama
Self	rang	a°tang
Six	truk	dok
Sixteen	chu-truk	chidok
Sore, *n.*	ma	mata

English.	Thibetan.	Garo.
Speech	ke	ku
Stupid	kukpa	gōka
Suddenly	lamsang	rangsan
Tear, *n.*	mik-chhu	mĭkchi
Ten	chu	chi or chikung
Tenth	chupa	chikunggipa
Tongue	che	sré
Twelve	chunyi	chigni
Two	nyi	gni
Village	trong-pa	song
Water	chhu	chi
Wine	chhang	chu

The Thibetan words are taken from the "Manual of Colloquial Tibetan," by C. A. Bell, I.C.S., and are of the Lhasa dialect. The Garo words are of the standard Awé dialect.

APPENDIX F.

COMPARATIVE VOCABULARY OF AWÉ, ATONG, RUGA, RABHA, AND KOCH WORDS.

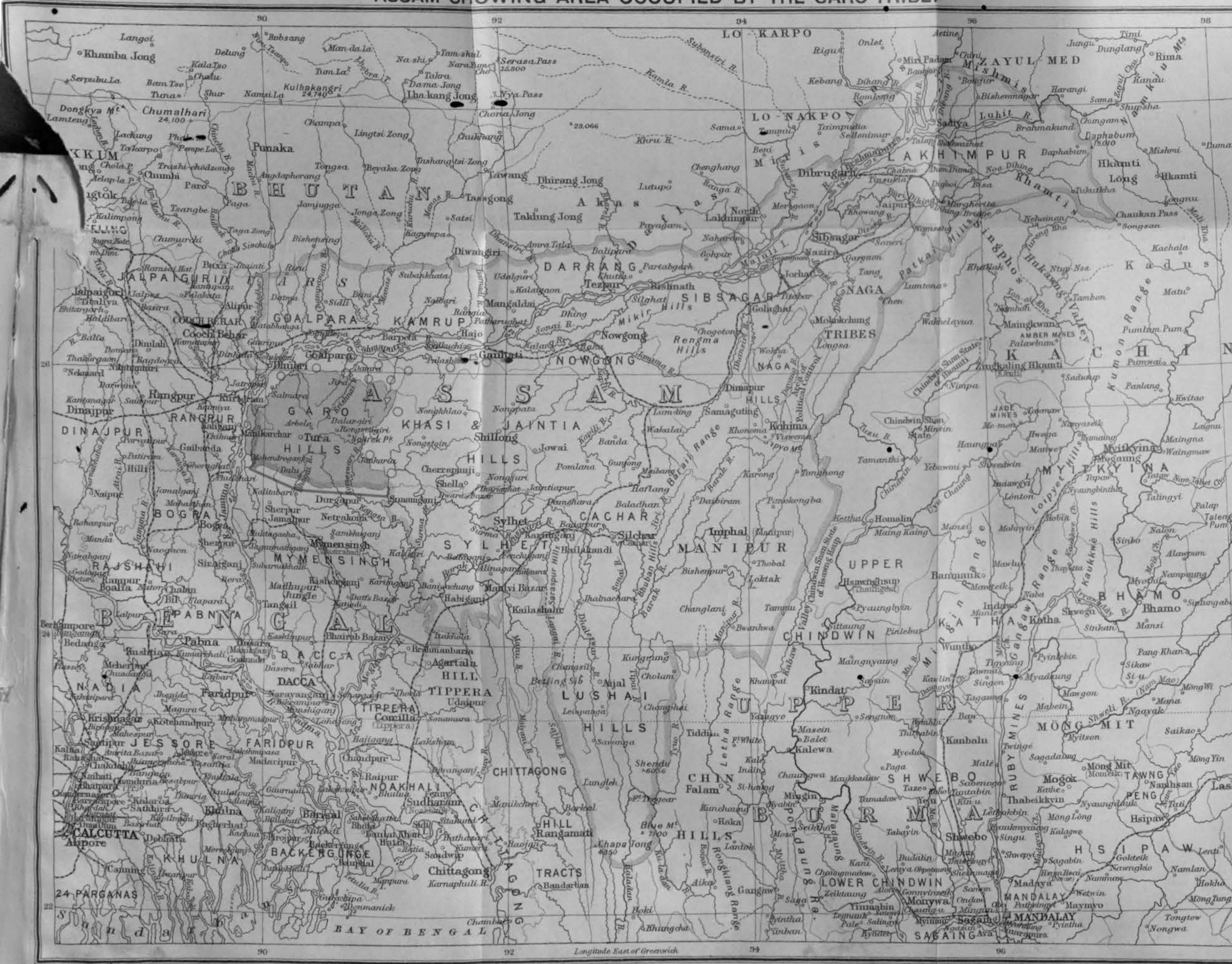
English.	Awé.	Atong.	Ruga.	Rabha.	Koch.
Sun	sal	rangsal	rasana	rangshang	rasan
Tongue	sré	telapak	telaia	khutulai	talai
Nose	gĭngtĭng	nakung	nakunga	gungpak	nakung
Back	jangĭl	kĭn	kundama	gyindam	kunju
Leg	ja	cha	taleng	tateng	chakreng
Head	skō	dĭkĭm	dukuma	dikam	dukum
Bone	greng	kéreng	kéreng	kingju	kereng
Skin	bigĭl	kol	kōla	khortaph	kopa
Blood	anchi	thai	tia	shi	thi
Hair	kni	kaō	kaō	khorō	kaō
Neck	gitok	dokereng	tukua	tokrang	karku
Tree	bol	pan	papang	pan	pan
Leaf	bijak	chak	wachak	chak	wachak
Flower	bibal	palwa	pal	par	par
Water	chi	tai	tia	chika	ti
Sword	mĭl°am	darai	suria	toroal	suri
Axe	rua	wakeng	wakeng	bakeng	wakeng
Bird	dō°ō	tau	taua	tō	tau
Egg	dō°bĭtchi	tauti	pitia	tōchi	tauti
Dried fish	nakam	nasaō	nasawa	nakem	nachaō
Petticoat	riking	ripan	repen	riphyan	
Spirit	mité	wai	wai	bai	wai
To laugh	ka°dingna	mimina	miminu	minina	mimina
To weep	grapna	kepna	kainu	khapna	kepna
To lift	dé°dōna	paitauna	paitumnu	chokna	paitauna
To bite	chikna	kaknakna	kaknu	kakna	kangna
Hot	dĭnga	tunga	dingu	tunga	burni
Sweet	chia	sĭma	sĭmu	syimma	sumni
Sour	mésenga	kaia	mésengō	khia	kuiou
White	gipok	pébok	bokō	boka	pebok
Far	chela	jana	janu	jana	hajan
Big	dal°a	chunga		chunga	mata
What?	mai ?	atong ?	atua ?	atō ?	bita ?
Dog	achak	kai	kuia	ki	kui

Note.—The above Rabha words are those of the Rangdaniya division, and the Koch words of the Tintikiya division.

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ASSAM SHOWING AREA OCCUPIED BY THE GARO TRIBE.



The Edinburgh Geographical Institute — J. G. Bartholomew

Large Settlement in Mymensingh — English Miles 0 20 40 60 80 100 — The Garo Tribe coloured thus — Villages in Goalpara, Kamrup and the Khasi Hills ○